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ABSTRACT

Papers presented at a conference on the use of simultaneous, consecutive, and other forms of interpreting as features of foreign language teaching and learning in British higher education include the following: "Liaison Interpreting as a Communicative Language-Learning Exercise" (H. A. Keith); "Interpreting and Communicating: Problems for the Student" (H. Janet Altman); "Consecutive Interpreting--The Theoretical Approach" (Kevin Bruton); "A Practical Approach to Consecutive Interpreting in the Fourth-Year Option" (Michael N. Croft); "Teaching Simultaneous Interpreting in French and German" (Andrew Riddell); "Ad Hoc Interpreting as a Teaching Technique for German" (Edda H. F. Ostarhild); "Liaison Interpreting Problems Specific to Italian" (Audrey A. Parnell); "Liaison Interpreting Problems Specific to French" (Jane Hanstock); "Interpreting Isn't Everything: Other Inter-Language Skills" (Michael Townson); "Interpreting and the Communicative Approach" (A. R. Layton); "Methodology or Technology? Striking a Balance in Advanced Language Teaching" (Brian Griffiths); and "Liaison Interpreting: Evaluation of the Exercise and of the Students" (Richard Towell). (MSE)

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Interpreting as a language teaching technique

Proceedings of a conference
convened by and held at the
University of Salford, 2-5 January 1985

Edited by Noel Thomas and Richard Towell

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We should like to thank all our colleagues, both in Salford and from other institutions, for their contributions to the conference and to the present volume. Without their help and co-operation the present book would have been an impossibility.

Introduction

Somewhat surprisingly, classes in interpreting have now been a feature of language teaching and language learning in British higher education for some twenty years. In that time the exercise has found a variety of roles, ranging from a presence on bilingual secretarial courses to postgraduate courses with a distinctly professional flavour. The conference organised in Salford early in the new year of 1985 attempted to examine the position in which the exercise found itself, and to enable those interested to re-assess its value.

The variety of courses in existence led initially to a certain amount of terminological confusion in the different terms which different participants used to refer to exercises which sometimes turned out to be the same. The parameters which led to a certain amount of misunderstanding were on the one hand the length of the utterance to be interpreted and on the other hand whether interpreting into the foreign language was involved. Terms such as ad hoc interpreting or bilateral interpreting tended to mean short passages (sometimes very short) to be interpreted both into and out of the foreign language; liaison interpreting was also used with the same meaning, but in some cases the length of the utterances was much greater, equivalent perhaps to those which some speakers would have considered appropriate in consecutive interpreting. This latter term referred largely to work from the foreign language into the mother tongue when the interpretation took place after the speaker had finished speaking. Simultaneous interpreting referred, unambiguously, to interpreting performed as the speaker was speaking. In some cases, however, participants referred to consecutive interpreting into the foreign language, and the choice of this term indicated utterances of a greater length than would be associated with ad hoc interpreting, but not necessarily than with liaison interpreting.

It became clear during the conference that different institutions make use of the exercise of interpreting in different ways, but a reasonable measure of agreement seemed to emerge about what was desirable, even if local constraints sometimes made that unattainable. First and foremost, the exercise emerged as one in which the focus on communication had to be maintained as much as possible in a teaching situation, enabling the student interpreter to play a fully functional role as a mediator between two cultures. Many speakers stressed the need to create a genuine feeling of responsibility in the language learner, whose task was to convey as completely as possible the message and the attitude of each speaker in an interlingual situation. It was clear this feeling could best be created by an atmosphere in which the students were aware that what they

said actually mattered and that communication would go wrong if they did not succeed in enabling two (or more) individuals to communicate with one another.

In addition, the exercise clearly works best when it is carefully inserted within a syllabus which develops the sub-skills of interpreting in a progressive way, and which provides the background knowledge necessary for the student interpreters to acquire both the linguistic and non-linguistic culture which will enable them to perform their functions adequately.

The conference served to remind all of us present how essential these aspects are for the successful use of interpreting as a language teaching technique, and perhaps also, how easy it is to forget these essential principles in the everyday administration of the exercise. At the same time, some of the workshops, especially, reminded us of how good this exercise can be when it is based on genuine communication and properly integrated within a course.

Noel Thomas & Richard Towell

1. Liaison interpreting as a communicative language-learning exercise

H A Keith

Heriot-Watt University

This paper examines the possibility of using an exercise based on liaison interpreting as a means of offering students of foreign languages practice in the oral language.

One of the motivating factors of such an exercise is the fact that it is a simulation of an authentic language activity which takes place in the 'real world', and it may therefore be of interest to look briefly at liaison interpreting in the professional situation before discussing the exercise itself.

In the professional sphere, when the term interpreting is used, it usually refers to conference interpreting, with its two subcategories: simultaneous interpreting and consecutive interpreting. Both involve specific skills which can be acquired formally at one of the many schools of interpreting, or, as was the case in the immediate post-war period before these schools were established, informally, through individual study and practice. There is a fairly clearly structured profession either within organisations such as the UN, the EC or NATO, or on a freelance basis, servicing international meetings and conferences, and there is a professional body - AIIC (Association Internationale des Interprètes de Conférence) - which concerns itself with rates of pay, conditions of work and other matters.

However, where liaison interpreting is concerned, the professional situation is rather less clear. If we define liaison interpreting as being the activity which takes place when an individual who speaks two languages mediates in a conversation between two or more individuals who do not speak each other's tongue, then it becomes clear that liaison interpreting (LI) is probably the commonest form of interpreting activity in the world today, taking place in a wide variety of situations including high-level talks between heads of state, business meetings, and much less structured situations such as machinery demonstrations, works visits, informal sightseeing tours, and even cocktail parties. The professional background of the individuals undertaking such interpreting tends to reflect this variety: in the business world the task may be undertaken by a foreign-language-speaking executive, a bilingual secretary or a staff translator. At conferences, liaison interpreting may be undertaken by conference interpreters as an additional duty during breaks between simultaneous interpreting sessions.

As far as formal training programmes are concerned, the situation is similarly varied. Some specific training in LI is often given as part of a vocational language course or secretarial training, but at the major European schools of interpreting it is generally held that a training in the skills of conference consecutive interpreting (aural comprehension, note-taking etc) is sufficient to equip an individual to undertake LI as well. Formal training in LI is therefore usually confined to those training as translators, who would not otherwise acquire these skills. It is possible to find specific LI training programmes, but these are usually either for a specialist type of interpreter - the Court Interpreter[1] - or for Community Interpreters who have to be trained to deal with the specific cultural and social problems of immigrant minorities.[2]

This paper is not concerned with examining questions relating to professional training courses for liaison interpreters, but rather with the possibility of including in foreign language courses at an advanced level an exercise based on the activity of liaison interpreting.

The title of the paper has been carefully chosen - LI is not described as a language teaching exercise but rather as a language learning exercise. The distinction between language teaching and language learning is a useful one. What is highlighted by this distinction is not just the familiar problem that not all teaching activities result in effective learning, but also the fact that language learning can occur in circumstances where language teaching, in the sense of overt instruction in the lexis and structures of the language, is not taking place. It is possible to set up activities where students consolidate the language skills which they already have, by being required actually to use the foreign language. But it is also possible to go further than that and devise activities which in themselves actually extend students' knowledge of lexis and idiom, by first confronting them with authentic language and then requiring them to use it themselves.

In written work, an example of the type of 'overt' teaching referred to above would be the grammar lesson where, after explicit instruction in a point of grammar, students write a series of written exercises designed to drill the point concerned; an example of a language activity primarily concerned with the consolidation of language knowledge would be free essay-writing, where students have to 'deploy' the language resources which they already possess, and an example of an activity which could actually extend students' knowledge would be the sort of structured composition exercise based on a foreign language (FL) text which is becoming increasingly popular in language courses at all levels.

The examples given above involve written exercises. Where oral work at tertiary level is concerned, there has not, in the past, been

very much investigation of alternatives to highly-structured language laboratory drills on the one hand and free-wheeling conversation with the language assistant on the other. It is not the intention of this paper to speculate at any length on the reasons for this. It may be because it is rather more difficult to devise structured oral exercises than written ones; but it may also be because many tertiary institutions have been unwilling to devote very many resources to oral work and have tended to rely for the development of oral skills in their students on the conversation class taken by the language assistant, combined with a compulsory period spent abroad.

There are, undoubtedly, a variety of possible oral exercises which can be used at this level, many of them based on the principle of role-playing or language games. The rest of this paper is devoted to a description of one particular form of role-playing exercise based on liaison interpreting, which, it will be suggested, can, in combination with certain preparatory exercises, fill this gap in the spectrum of oral language work at advanced level.

A LI class consists of a group of about eight to ten students with two teachers - one native English speaker and one native foreign-language speaker. The two teachers conduct a conversation, each in his/her native language, on a set topic[3], and the students take turns to render what is said in the other language. The students have to assume that the speakers do not speak each other's language and are therefore relying entirely on the interpretation. Suspension of disbelief is made easier by the teachers playing an assumed role - perhaps that of a journalist, or a specialist in the field concerned. This has the additional advantage of clearly identifying the status of the two interlocutors and their relationship with each other and with the interpreter. Students are then forced to take into account the interpersonal factors involved in oral discourse and develop an awareness of the importance of adopting the correct tenor for the situation concerned.

Continuous concentration on the part of the students can be achieved by adopting a random system of selecting which student will perform, and by making the selection <u>after</u> each statement has been made.

For reasons which will become clear when the role of context in this exercise is discussed below, it is advisable to make one student responsible for a complete conversational interchange - which may consist of two statements or more.

In the exercise a variety of demands are made on the students. When a student is interpreting a statement made in the foreign language, these consist of:

a) Aural comprehension - the student has to listen to a statement

in the foreign language and to decode it. Two factors, however, make this different from the aural comprehension exercise commonly used in schools:

- firstly, the statements are highly contextualised, being part of a lengthier exchange on a specific topic for which the students have been prepared in a variety of ways (see below);

- secondly, the student is not just a passive listener but has the opportunity to intervene and ask for repetition or clarification when necessary. Students can be encouraged to take an active role in the proceedings in order to ensure optimum comprehension.

b) Processing of the contents of the statement. This is an important aspect of the task. It is important that in this exercise the students should be dealing with relatively spontaneous utterances generated by the dynamics of the communicative situation, rather than with prepared, pre-scripted statements.[4] One reason for this is that working from a script may prevent the teachers from responding properly to the message transmitted by the student rather than the message put out by the other speaker (a vital aspect of the exercise, as will become clear when the role of correction is discussed below).

But there is another reason and this is related to the nature of spoken discourse. Conversational analysts have characterised the differences between the spoken and written discourse in some detail. The type of discourse found in LI could perhaps be defined as a 'mediated conversation' which, although more formal than a totally spontaneous conversation, nevertheless at times displays the repetitions, redundancies and relatively poor formulation characteristic of spontaneous speech. It is the essence of the LI exercise that the students should at times have to extract from a relatively rambling statement the essential gist of what has been said - the 'vouloir dire' as Danica Seleskovitch (1974) puts it [5] - and restructure the statement before reformulating it in the foreign language.[6]

This aspect is stressed because it ensures that the exercise does not deteriorate into being an exercise in oral translation. The liaison interpreting exercise being described here should on no account become merely the oral translation of aurally received sentences. For this reason it is important to discourage students from taking detailed notes beyond the occasional fact, figure or name. This is because the natural tendency to synthesise and restructure information as it is aurally received and memorised can help to prevent literal translation from occurring. The teacher has to be careful to gauge the length of each statement to what students can retain without needing copious notes. Their retention ability increases with practice.[7]

c) The third element involved is transmission of the message in the other language, i.e. the process of re-encoding. Once the student has gone through the decoding and analysis stages, he/she is left with a certain content which has to be encoded in the target language. Opinions differ as to the form in which this information is retained by the student. Is it still in the source language? Is it already partially translated or is it in the form of some sort of non-linguistic gestalt?[8] Quite possibly the form it takes will vary from one individual to another. But if language interference is going to occur in this exercise - and this is a danger present in any exercise involving movement between two languages - then it is at this point: under the pressure of the exercise the student may unwittingly allow his/her own encoding of the message in the target language to be influenced by the source language. This is why it is important carefully to judge the length of the source-language statement so as to avoid the necessity of detailed note-taking, which might otherwise encourage this sort of interference.[9]

For native speakers of English, although problems can occur at all stages, there are two particularly critical points in this process:

a) decoding of statements made in the FL
b) encoding of English statements in the FL

It has already been stated that in decoding the FL the students are in a position to ask for repetition or clarification. While this does not ensure that all potential errors can be avoided, it does reduce the likelihood of misunderstandings occurring. When encoding problems occur, the situation is more complicated. In some circumstances a student can try out a vocabulary item he is not certain of on the FL speaker. What he should not be tempted to do, if he adheres to the game principle in this exercise (ignorance of each other's language on the part of the interlocutors) is to actually ask how a word is to be translated, for this would break the 'dramatic illusion' that the two speakers require the aid of an interpreter.[10] On the other hand, a 'near miss' will usually provoke some helpful reaction from a native speaker even in real life, and students quickly learn the phrases which can be used to elicit such help.

But the essence of this exercise is that a student should very rarely find himself in a linguistic impasse. This is an exercise in communication, and students are encouraged, if they cannot find the 'mot juste', to use other verbal means to express the idea which they are trying to communicate. Thus, flexibility and creative use of their linguistic resources are fostered - qualities which are desirable in every speaker of a foreign language, but which many students may not be aware of possessing until they are forced to express ideas which are relatively complex.

Nevertheless, errors will still occur and if the linguistic rigour of this exercise is to be maintained it is important that these should not be allowed to pass uncorrected. There are two possible ways in which correction can be carried out: repeated grammatical errors (genders, endings, verbal forms, etc) or slight misuse of lexical items (collocations, register, etc) can be noted by the teachers and discussed in a 10-15 minute debriefing session at the end of the class. This should be undertaken at the end of the exercise rather than immediately after each student has performed, otherwise the vital illusion that this is a real-life interpreting situation is broken. The only disadvantage of this form of correction is that it loses immediacy and therefore some of its impact on the student. There are two alternative methods:

- Firstly, just as a benign listener can help a student as he or she struggles to express an idea, so, too, a certain degree of gentle correction by the listener is legitimate, because this very often happens in real life. Thus if a word is given the wrong gender, the reply can repeat the word in the right gender, or if a word is mispronounced the reply can gently stress the correct pronunciation. This form of correction presupposes a sensitivity on the part of the students, but once students are aware that correction may take this form, they may actually develop such sensitivity: they are motivated to listen more discerningly to the linguistic detail as well as the factual content of the FL speaker's statements.

- Secondly, it is possible, on occasion, to record a short session (about 20 minutes) of the exercise and play it back to the students, stopping the tape for comment on errors. This is especially useful if it is felt that the students are becoming careless in their attitude towards the minutiae of the language and are concentrating too much on the communicative aspect.

However, the primary function of this exercise is the communicative use of the language, and it is the correction of communicative errors which is of greatest importance. These can be dealt with in the same way as grammatical ones, but there is also a third possibility:

- If the student commits an error which distorts the message he/she is supposed to be transmitting or puts across the message in an incomprehensible form because he/she has failed to take into account the cultural gap between the two speakers, then the interlocutor can either refuse to understand what is being said, in which case the student has to reconsider the formulation; or, if the message makes sense but deviates from the original, the interlocutor can (indeed should if the illusion is being maintained) take what the student says at face value and continue the conversation along the lines which the mis-rendering suggests. If this is skilfully done it is

possible to draw the student's attention to the blunder without actually interrupting the conversation. Such 'nose-rubbing' will probably have a greater impact on the student concerned and will be retained rather longer than convential correction.

One of the purposes which this type of correction serves is to bring home to the students the idea that transfer of a message from one language to another is not an automatic process undertaken on a phrase-by-phrase or sentence-by-sentence basis, but rather one in which the person undertaking the transferral process (in this case the interpreter) has a responsibility to ensure that the parameters of the linguistic and cultural context are properly taken into account so that the message arrives in its appropriate form and is completely and correctly understood by the recipient. This is one of the reasons why, as was stated earlier, it is advisable to make one student responsible for interpreting an entire interactional exchange, before moving on to the next student: if a student sows a communicative mistake, he thus reaps the ensuing disaster.

At this point it is worth examining the type of language used in this exercise. Unlike most conversational lessons, where it is the colloquial use of the FL which is being practised, the type of language appropriate to discussion/negotiation involved in the LI exercise is of a higher register, even though it is still spoken language. It is often precisely in the use of this kind of language that the students lack experience. At school and during any period spent abroad they may well develop impressive fluency in the colloquial spoken language. But they often have little appreciation of the different tenor involved in more formal situations and lack facility in the language appropriate to it. In German, for example, they have little ability to sustain in oral production the more complex syntactical structures appropriate to such a tenor. The exercise thus fills an important gap in students' facility in oral use of the language.

The other aspect of language use with which the liaison interpreting exercise can familiarise students is certain useful categories of illocutionary act. In a face-to-face conversation, depending on the type of interchange involved, language can be used in a variety of instrumental ways:

<u>general speech acts</u>
- introducing one speaker to another
- asserting, implying, agreeing, disagreeing, conceding, rebutting, denying
- quoting
- requesting information

<u>organisational speech acts</u>
- signalling end/beginning of interchange

- introducing new topics
- referring back to previous points made

Each one of these speech acts can be further refined and differentiated - one can express slight disagreement, partial disagreement, strong disagreement, complete rejection of a point of view, etc.

In an LI class these speech acts are being used in a clear discourse context and their effectiveness can be monitored by the reaction of the other speaker. It is helpful to introduce students beforehand to the concept of the speech act, central to the pragmatics of language use, and to teach them various ways of varying the precise illocutionary force of statements in the FL.

At this point it is worth briefly discussing assessment of student performance, though the importance of ease of assessment should not be overstressed as a criterion in judging the usefulness of a language exercise. LI is primarily a communicative exercise, rather than a test. Nevertheless, it may be necessary to carry out a formal assessment of student performance in liaison interpreting, if only in order to judge whether any learning has taken place. An LI examination can take the form of a conversation [11] which is carefully prepared in order to confront students with a number of the illocutionary acts which they have been practising and also with certain communicative challenges, such as badly structured statements, idiomatically expressed ideas, or cultural references which may need elucidation by the interpreter. Assessment of each student's performance will be based on the following criteria:

a) communicative competence - has the student transmitted all the basic information without distortion? Moreover, has the correct illocutionary force of each utterance been recognised and adequately expressed?

b) efficiency - has the student achieved a) as succinctly as possible using the appropriate lexis and register?

c) accuracy - has the student expressed him/herself with grammatical accuracy?

Of course, it is not always possible to separate these criteria, as failure under c) may effect both a) and b). It is best to adopt a positive rather than a negative approach, giving a student a pass mark if criterion a) has been fulfilled and adding marks according to the extent to which criteria b) and c) are fulfilled. The emphasis of the assessment is thus rather different from the approach usually involved in the assessment of exercises such as translation. It is not so much grammatical accuracy or fidelity to the source text which is paramount but fidelity to the communicative intention of the speaker.

The question arises as to what stage in a language course is appropriate for the introduction of the LI exercise. The level of difficulty of the exercise can be varied to a certain extent by altering the language input of the teachers. But it may be felt that there is a threshold of oral competence on the part of the students below which the exercise is less successful. In particular it may be felt that, in order to make satisfactory use of the sort of language used in the exercise, the students need to have been introduced to it and to have practised it previously. It is probably not enough to rely on the FL speaker's language use during the exercise to serve as a model, although it has a useful reinforcing function. One of the merits of the LI exercise is that it can be linked with other exercises and thus serve as the nucleus of a whole series of language activities which together can serve for both language learning and language reinforcement.

The exercises which one may use in conjunction with the liaison interpreting class can be divided into two categories which I shall call a) pre-exercises and b) post-exercises. The former are probably the most valuable.

a) Pre-exercises

Prior to the LI class, either a written text or a tape-recording can be issued to the students. In the early stages of the exercise students can be given a recording of a monolingual FL conversation on the topic to be discussed in the liaison interpreting class a week later. Students can listen to the tape as often as they like and familiarise themselves with the topic, related vocabulary items and even with certain speech acts which are built into the conversation. The degree to which the class conversation is based on the taped conversation can be varied and thus allows for a grading of the degree of difficulty of the exercise as students' confidence and ability increase.

Experience shows that student motivation to carry out such an aural comprehension exercise is extremely high because of the awareness of its instrumental usefulness in terms of enhanced performance in the class exercise.[12]

At a later stage the preparation material given to students can be in written form - perhaps a newspaper article - but they are still well motivated to prepare the material assiduously, and can be encouraged to write out word-lists which may be consulted in the course of the class.

If it is felt that students require specific drilling in certain grammatical/syntactical constructions (reported speech in French or German) or in certain speech-acts, it is relatively easy to devise

language laboratory exercises which drill these. Again, the students are usually well motivated to do these exercises in their spare time because they are not isolated drills, but are perceived to enhance their performance in the class.[13]

b) Post-exercises

With the addition of certain exercises which can be completed after the class the liaison interpreting 'package' is complete. Various written exercises can be linked with the LI class, but perhaps the most useful of these is minute-writing. One student can be designated at the beginning of each class to keep notes on the entire proceedings and afterwards write up the discussion in English in the form of minutes. Thus each student - if the exercise is done weekly - will have to write up the minutes about once a term. Minute-writing is a useful skill for any student to develop, involving as it does note-taking and the ability to synthesise a discussion after it has taken place. The option also exists of asking them to write the minutes in the FL.

An additional oral exercise can be created by making a sound- or video-recording during the LI class and then editing out the student performances. The 'spaced' tape can then be made available for the students to practise on in their own time. This inevitably means the reduction of what was a relatively spontaneous and 'authentic' simulation game to a sort of oral/aural 'fill-in' exercise, but it can nevertheless prove to be a useful consolidation exercise, particularly if the problems occurring on the tape have already been discussed at some length with the students.

This paper has attempted to sketch out the main characteristics of liaison interpreting as a language exercise. It is essentially a hybrid exercise which gives students practice in a number of areas:

- receptive skills: aural comprehension and the mental ordering and restructuring of a message;
- productive skills: communicative use of language and the creative use of their linguistic resources in the FL to express a given content.

The exercise can also increase students' sensitivity to nuances of the language, their awareness of the role that context plays in communicative language use, and their ability to act as mediators between a foreign culture and their own.

If the conversations which the students interpret are on topics related to the background studies element in their degree course, then the exercise may be seen as a valuable bridge between this and the language element.

One general benefit is that a formal oral exercise of this nature

can increase the confidence with which students express themselves in front of others, not only in the foreign language but also in their native tongue.

The liaison interpreting class is labour-intensive, involving, as it does, small groups and two teachers. But if it is used not in isolation but as the focus for a series of language exercises which otherwise require little staff input once they have been set up, it can prove to be a cost-effective and attractive addition to the oral exercises available at advanced level.

NOTES

1. Canada, especially, has extensive training schemes for court interpreters - see Roberts, R P, ed: L'interprétation auprès des tribunaux. Ottawa: Ottawa University Press, 1981.

2. There are a number of such schemes in Britain.

3. These topics can be related to the subjects covered in background studies lectures, thus effectively integrating the Language and European Studies elements which often make up a modern languages degree course. Alternatively, the kinds of topical matters traditionally discussed in conversation classes may be used.

4. It is perhaps best for the teachers concerned to prepare the conversation in note form and to formulate the actual utterances on the spot.

5. Seleskovitch, D: 'Zur Theorie des Übersetzens.' In: Übersetzer und Dolmetscher, ed V Kapp. Heidelberg: Quelle und Meyer, 1974, p 37-50.

6. The degree to which reformulation is necessary depends, of course, on the speaker. One may have to build redundancies and repetitions deliberately in to one's statements if 'waffle' does not come naturally!

7. One of the preparatory exercises one can use is to present students with such statements in their mother tongue and ask them to sum up the information content.

8. Diehl introduces the concept of the 'noeme' in her discussion of this question. See Diehl, E: 'Psycholinguistik und Dolmetscherpraxis - ein Versuch der Vermittlung.' In: Die Theorie des Übersetzens und ihr Aufschlusswert für die Übersetzungs- und Dolmetschdidaktik; W Wilss and G Thome eds. Tübingen: Günter Narr, 1984, p 289-297.

9. Of course, if students are also being trained in consecutive interpreting then they should acquire a 'conceptual' note-taking technique which can also be used for LI.

10. This is why acceptance of the 'rules of the game' is so important: it influences the entire language behaviour of the students.

11. In order to allow for comparisons to be made, it is advisable for each student to be presented with the same conversation, which does not have to exceed 12-15 minutes in duration. The entire proceedings can be recorded so that, if necessary, they can be listened to again by the examiners. In fact, it is usually possible to make an instant assessment of performance.

12. For further discussion of the possibilities provided by background tapes for students, see Bradley, D: 'An audio-lingual aid to better prose translation'. Audio-Visual Language Journal, vol 16, no. 1, 1978, p 15-18.

13. The evidence suggests that students regard the LI class as a high-stress occasion and are grateful for any aids which serve to improve their performance.

2. Interpreting and communicating: problems for the student

H Janet Altman

Heriot-Watt University

Few would disagree, I hope, that interpreting amounts to more than the mere transposition of words from one language into another. [1] Nor is it simply the oral equivalent of written translation. When a translation is executed, the producer, processor and receiver of the written text work on it separately (years may elapse between the publishing of a novel and that of its translation) and in isolation from each other. The translator is generally unable either to refer back to the author or to gauge the effect of his own work on the reader. When an interpretation is performed, however, the three phases happen (almost) at the same time and in the same place. There is direct contact between the speaker, the interpreter and the listener.

But how easy is it to establish effective communication, even when the producer, mediator and receiver are all together? As Ruth Willet says:

> *Die Missverständnisse, die wir alle aus täglicher eigener Erfahrung kennen, beweisen, dass vollkommen gelungene Kommunikation keine Selbstverständlichkeit ist.[2]*

The problems of ordinary communication are compounded in an interpreting situation for various reasons: the interlocutors have different cultural backgrounds, do not understand each other's language and are forced to convey their ideas indirectly, through an intermediary who usually lacks expert knowledge in their field.

Professional interpreters do manage to operate under such conditions. Their knowledge of the foreign language is sufficiently extensive to minimise linguistic misunderstandings, and they are used to grappling with complex ideas and with garbled, rapid or tedious forms of delivery. They should, moreover, be able to produce fluent, expressive English despite the need to concentrate on many other activities simultaneously: listening to, digesting and reproducing the original.

Although British undergraduate students are not expected to achieve professional standard, many find that interpreting classes present considerable problems. I should like to refer to four main skills which are required for interpreting but which present particular difficulty for the student: fluency in the mother tongue, command

of the foreign language, sensitivity to the content of an utterance, and the art of public speaking.

Firstly, successful interpretation depends largely upon the student's command of English. This may sound paradoxical in the context of a degree in foreign languages, but students' inability to express themselves fluently in a relatively formal register of English is a major obstacle to communication. The problem can be tackled at the beginning of the first year at university by means of language laboratory exercises aimed at the production of English.[3] These might begin with the reproduction from memory of a simple two-minute dialogue about the respective merits of two local football teams, and progress to what more closely resembles consecutive interpreting, although still monolingual: a summarised version of a ten-minute Radio Four interview about Spanish accession to the European Community, with the aid of elementary note-taking in the form of key-words. The students' attention should be drawn to linguistic features such as unfamiliar vocabulary or rhetorical speech devices which they might try to imitate next time. Another useful exercise is to call for as many synonyms of a given word as possible and, in so doing, to elicit comments from the students as to why, for example, the words 'upheaval' and 'rumpus' are not interchangeable. Even final-year students benefit from a deliberate attempt by the teacher to improve their appreciation of English usage. Fluency of expression in the mother tongue and sensitivity to its use are, I feel, necessary prerequisites for the teaching of foreign language (FL) interpreting.

Secondly, the student's command of the FL must be borne in mind in the designing of interpreting classes. A certain level of language knowledge must exist before any interpreting is possible, if complete breakdowns in communication are to be avoided. It would therefore probably be too early to begin interpreting in the first year of a university course, although that is not too early to introduce tuition in note-taking, aural comprehension, etc as a preliminary stage. If, on the other hand, one refrained from teaching interpreting until the final year, students would have very limited exposure to the discipline, which means that the second year is perhaps the optimum time to start, initially with consecutive and progressing eventually to simultaneous interpreting.[4] At this early stage, texts must be very carefully written so that their complexity does not render them inaccessible to students. The subject matter should be straightforward, not abstract, and should have a low information density. The sentence structure and lexical content should be simple, and the speech presented by a native speaker at a fairly slow, deliberate pace.

Even at fourth-year level, when students are much more competent in the FL, speech material must be selected very carefully. Newspaper

articles are admittedly an excellent source of appropriately topical material, but they become counter-productive and impracticable when read out verbatim and expressionlessly. Articles are written to be perused on the page, not absorbed aurally; their information content is usually too dense for interpreting purposes, their style and structure too impenetrable even for professionals to tackle adequately. But they can be used to great advantage as the basis for a verbal presentation by the FL lecteur, who will adapt them carefully, under the lecturer's supervision, simplifying linguistic structures where necessary and incorporating devices such as rhetorical questions, repetitions, redundancies, etc. Teachers might also be tempted, at a more advanced level, to make use of authentic speech material, wherever it is available. All efforts to make exercises as realistic as possible should be applauded, but we should never lose sight of the fact that our students' expertise is comparatively limited. Care must be taken to scrutinise such texts before use, in order to eliminate unnecessary complexities.

Thirdly, in order that they may interpret satisfactorily, we need to teach undergraduates how to be sensitive to the contents of a speech. The benefits of a first-year introduction to text linguistics can be reaped throughout the remainder of the course in both translation and interpretation classes. Most students find interpreting a very difficult, not to say daunting, task. It can, however, be considerably facilitated if they are well prepared for it. To this end, it needs to be fully integrated into the degree structure, following the same thematic pattern: one month on the topic of education systems and the next on political parties, for example. If students are involved in translation, interpreting and background studies on one specific topic at a given time, their knowledge and understanding of it is increased. They should also be encouraged to read newspapers regularly and keep up to date with current affairs. [5]

If the exact topic of the session is announced well in advance, together with certain essential items of information about the speech, one can assume, and indeed insist, that students should come along with the benefit of advance preparation.[6] At the start of the class it is well worth spending some time discussing the information which they have gathered, and then asking the question 'What can we expect this speaker to say?' It is almost always possible to anticipate at least part of the content of a speech, and it considerably facilitates the task of interpreting if one bears in mind the message likely to underlie the speaker's words. Claude Namy's checklist is most useful in this context. His students are instructed always to ask themselves certain questions about both the speaker and the listener, e.g. 'Who is he? What is his nationality? What is his cultural background? What is he hoping to get out of the conference?'[7] A student can thus learn to predict that the French President, in a speech about nuclear weapons, is likely

to stress the independent attitude of his country, whereas the Belgian Prime Minister could be expected to raise the issue of the stationing of American missiles in his country.

A fourth problem presented by interpreting is the obligation to speak in public. This is something which all students will have to do at some time in later life and is therefore a useful skill to acquire. The video-recording of student performances can be a most worthwhile activity, particularly for the purposes of consecutive interpreting, where the practitioner is in full view of the audience and needs to appear confident and convincing. Just as we all experience surprise when first hearing a tape-recording of our own voices, so it is quite salutary for students to see themselves as others see them. Many people could usefully be made aware of mannerisms which might distract or irritate an audience. Simultaneous interpreting involves a different type of public performance: here, there can be no eye contact or body language; communication is solely verbal. Students can be taught how to use their voices to the full: they must learn how to adopt an interesting intonation pattern, and to eliminate unfinished sentences and excessively long pauses.

It is not easy in the artificial environment of the booth, and in the absence of a dependent audience, for students to remember that their interpretation is intended for a listener. This situation can be remedied by the holding of simulated conferences on topics which tie in with background courses, such as 'Have the United Nations a role to play in the 1980s?' or 'Does an increase in European nationalism lead to violence?' These take the form at Heriot-Watt of round-table discussions with the participation of our French, German, Russian and Spanish-speaking exchange students. Here, the final-year student cannot forget, as he might in the classroom, that he is an intermediary. If he fails to communicate the message, a substantial section of the audience will immediately be prevented from following the proceedings, and should be encouraged to protest vociferously. Simulated conferences also have the benefit, if a sufficiently controversial topic is chosen for discussion, of generating free, spontaneous utterances, as opposed to the more formal, scripted ones with which students are usually confronted, and thus presenting students with experience of a different type of text form. These conferences do also have the incidental merit of convincing certain students that it is actually possible to enjoy interpreting. For realistic interpreting experience of a more formal type, we periodically organise public debates at Heriot-Watt. They are held in a lecture theatre which is equipped with interpreting booths at the back. To the students, working for such a large audience is a great challenge, but one to which most respond well.

The follow-up to classes is extremely important. The student's performance improves perceptibly when he/she has learned to diagnose

his/her own errors. Criteria for self-correction can be established by the teacher, for example:

1. How convincing is your version as a piece of English?
2. How much relation does it bear to the original?
   Note down any major 'contresens', omissions, over-translations, etc.
3. Make general comments about your delivery.

The teacher can then add his/her assessment to the student's own. [8]

Mastery of the four skills discussed here should enable students to communicate a message successfully. Jean Herbert (1968) states unequivocally that communication is the prime purpose of interpreting:

> The interpreter should never forget that the immediate and essential object of his work is to enable his audience to know accurately what the speaker intended to convey, and to make on the audience the impression which the speaker wishes to make.[9]

A student who has learned to understand a speech in the FL, to analyse and digest its content, and to reproduce before an audience an English version of it will surely have overcome the major problems of interpreting as a communicative skill.

NOTES

1. The term 'interpreting' refers, for the purposes of this article, to the two forms of conference interpreting, consecutive and simultaneous, and to the reproduction in English of FL material.

2. I translate: The misunderstandings which we all experience in everyday life prove that we cannot assume communication will always succeed completely.
   Willett, Ruth: 'Die Ausbildung zum Konferenzdolmetscher.' In: Übersetzer und Dolmetscher; ed V Kapp. Heidelberg: Quelle und Meyer, 1974, p 87-109 (p 89).

3. My colleague, Dr A Hunter, has devised some such exercises.

4. I am assuming that the third year of the course is spent abroad.

5. This preparatory work is similar to that engaged in by professional interpreters: when I was to interpret at a gathering of Freemasons, for instance, I consulted the Encyclopaedia

Britannica for background information, received a monolingual specialised dictionary from the organisers, did some individual vocabulary work, and was, of course, aware from the press of the sensitivity of the recent so-called 'P 2 scandal' when the subject arose.

6. Examples might be as follows:

   1. Speech given by M Van Lennep, Secretary General of the OECD at the UNIDO Conference in August 1984.
   2. Speech given by Herr Seeler of the Socialist Group in the European Parliament in October 1984 on the subject of the international monetary situation.

7. Namy, Claude: 'Reflections on the training of simultaneous interpreters: a metalinguistic approach.' In: Language Interpretation and Communication; ed David Gerver and H W Sinaiko. New York: Plenum Press, 1978, p 25-32 (p 32).

8. These criteria were suggested by my colleague, Mr D Bradley.

9. Herbert, Jean: The interpreter's handbook: how to become a conference interpreter. 2nd edn. Geneva: Georg, 1968, p 23.

3. Consecutive interpreting – the theoretical approach

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The thrust of the present article derives from a conviction built upon experience. The experience is eight years of teaching the three different modes of interpreting - consecutive, simultaneous and liaison - at varying university and polytechnic levels, both undergraduate and postgraduate, as well as some limited experience of practising interpreting in industry. The conviction is that consecutive interpreting is one of the best methods of advanced foreign language teaching and is, for reasons which I shall outline, the obvious, although often neglected, way in which to introduce students to interpreting. My title is not meant to imply any belief on my part that theoretical approaches to consecutive interpreting teaching can in any way be separated from practical classroom experience, but rather corresponds to a fierce intuition that the rationale for consecutive interpreting in the classroom has been little examined in academic and pedagogic circles and that this rationale needs airing and debating. Indeed, one of the frustrations of seeking out the few academic studies that have been written in article or book form on the subject is the constant conflation and often confusion of interpretation and translation that one finds. Tony Layton (1985) [1] refers to the relevance that translation, especially if it stresses the communicative rather than the semantic function, can have to interpreting. Such relevance has usually been unstudied hypothesis; more commonly, a book title such as L G Kelly's The true interpreter (1979) [2] conceals a subtitle such as 'A history of translation theory and practice in the West', which prefaces the complete omission of any attempt to analyse interpreting theory.

I want to begin then with a rule-of-thumb definition of interpretation between languages which starts from a recognition that all of us are accustomed to monolingual interpretation in our daily lives, when, for example, as parents we talk to our children, reformulating adult conceptions into speech acts comprehensible to the very young. Bruce Anderson's terse definition then seems to me adequate when he writes that 'interpretation occurs whenever a message originating in one language is reformulated and retransmitted in a second language' [3]. Most writers on interpreting would go on to suggest that the successful interpretation should produce the same impact or impression on its audience as the impact or impression which the speaker wishes to create on an audience which understands him directly.

If message and impact are key components in accurate communication, what are the skills or aptitudes which such imperatives demand in

the person interpreting? John Carroll's (1978) article, entitled 'Linguistic abilities in translators and interpreters', to be found in a useful 1978 compendium, Language interpretation and communication,[4] usefully summarises quantitative tests and psychological research. Whilst agreeing that the factor traditionally defined as the 'V factor' or the 'verbal factor' is obviously important - and by this is meant not only 'the individual's knowledge of advanced vocabulary but also his sensitivity to established word usages, to the nuances of idiomatic phrases and his ability to predict the transitional probability of words in phrases'[5] - Carroll goes on to discuss a number of fluency factors which vary from individual to individual and which the interpreter needs to a high degree. He refers to Word fluency, or the ability to manipulate orthographic materials to create lists of words; to Ideational fluency, defined as 'the facility to call up ideas wherein quantity and quality of idea is emphasised'[6]; to Expressional fluency, or 'the ability to think rapidly of appropriate wording for ideas'[7]; and to Associational fluency, defined as 'the ability to produce words from a restricted area of meaning'.[8] The crucial common denominator is speed in producing a variety of verbal responses under particular constraints. Clearly, too, a high general culture and education are bound to be predictive of the success of an interpreter meeting the demands of a wide variety of contexts in humanities, natural and social sciences, commerce and industry, government and politics, and so on. The aptitudes postulated above may seem to apply to very few individuals but the consecutive interpreting process, I would argue, allows these aptitudes to be stimulated, stretched and strengthened, while all the time concentrating attention on the rapid comprehension, assimilation, analysis and reformulation of the message.

Consecutive interpreting is a more formal exercise than liaison, demanding a reproduction at the end of a speech, from a combination of memory and notes, which makes it easier to break down the interpreting process and examine the skills required - not just the skills of the various fluencies and the verbal factor already mentioned, nor of the general culture of the practitioner, but also of the considerable intellectual qualities required to cope with the process successfully. It is as well to make clear at this juncture that, for teaching purposes, I regard liaison interpreting as an exercise involving short or relatively short exchanges, which students ought to be able to manage without recourse to notes, except for numbers, statistics, dates, names, etc. Consecutive I consider to involve more lengthy discourses, usually of a more formal nature, which it would generally be impossible to reproduce without some kind of methodical note-taking. I do, however, share the view of those who argue that when our liaison dialogues become more extended, and especially when they are replete with factual information, then we are effectively in a consecutive interpreting situation. Furthermore, although it is obvious that most consecutive interpreting learning will involve interpreting from the foreign language

into the mother tongue, I see no reason why this should not be accompanied by consecutive interpreting classroom work into the foreign language, above all, of course, at the later and more advanced stages of study and even though this is not the customary practice in the professional interpreting situation.

Although consecutive interpreting has virtually vanished in conference situations, the fact is that it is through a progression of exercises aimed at teaching the student to grasp, analyse, remember and only subsequently reproduce the message of a speaker, that it is then possible to proceed to acceptable simultaneous interpretation where required or desired. For the same reason, that consecutive interpreting provides the conditions for a lengthier and more structured pedagogic approach than liaison interpreting, it seems to me more logical to begin with consecutive. Such a statement, that consecutive interpreting should precede other modes because it is possible to put one's hand on methodological errors and approach the task analytically, demands that the consecutive interpreting process be broken down into its constituent parts.

A recent attempt to do this is made in a contribution by Déjean Le Féal to an important 1981 study, L'enseignement de l'interprétation et de la traduction,[9] which proposes a simple division into three: listening, memorisation, reformulation. It is evident, however, that this suggested division is too clearcut for the overlapping that takes place during consecutive interpreting, since it is during listening that memorisation occurs and reformulation surely begins during memorisation before the interpreter actually opens his mouth. In fact, Déjean Le Féal virtually recognises that the term 'listening' is too broad a category by further dividing it into 'perception of words' and 'comprehension of sense',[10] in other words borrowing once again the Seleskovitch distinction between linguistic meaning and non-verbal sense. Let me then propose an entirely unoriginal, but I hope uncontroversial, four-part division of the process and look at each part in turn according to the attention it merits:

1. comprehension of the message at a purely linguistic level
2. analysis of the message
3. storing of information in an amalgam of memory and note-taking form
4. reformulation of the message

To return to the first part - comprehension of the message at a purely linguistic level - this is so obviously dependent upon the whole range of foreign language learning prior to the interpreting process, that it is a sine qua non of participation with any pleasure or success in the activity. It is here surely that the sheer volume and vastness of exposure to auditory information in the foreign language will be crucial to the mental receptivity and acuity needed to process comprehensibly and comprehensively

particular linguistic items heard in a particular situation. While consecutive interpreting exercises can themselves build upon the solid foundations of foreign language acquisition, they cannot in themselves provide an edifice for the student.

The second part of the process - analysis of the message - would be clearly identified by the majority of teachers of or commentators on interpreting as the most vital constituent. Crucial to this is the necessity for the interpreter to develop almost as second nature the habit of 'concentrated' or 'critical' listening ('écoute active' in French studies of interpreting). This concentrated listening is different from normal listening because the interpreter is the receptacle, not the destination of incoming auditory material. Déjean Le Féal reminds us that the interpreter may not have, and usually will not have, the same knowledge of the subject matter as those for whom it is in theory intended, so that he must maximise understanding of the explicit part of what he hears and compensate for any lack of knowledge by increased receptivity. Or, to put this another way, he must mobilise all his knowledge of the subject as well as of related subjects in order to deliver the goods. The analogy which Déjean Le Féal makes is that of a detective maximising circumstantial evidence so as to solve the crime.[11]

One of the problems of concentrated listening is that it appears to demand two contrary abilities in the interpreter: the detachment which is essential for the interpreter to put himself in someone else's place and play a temporary role; and at the same time, the personal commitment needed if the student is to feed his own experience into the task being undertaken. It is perhaps from this precarious act of synthesising opposing requirements that the phenomenon of 'freezing', among novice or student interpreters, most commonly results. Ways of improving concentrated listening in order to aid analysis of the message could include any exercise which involves the interpreter adapting himself to the discourse while mobilising supplementary knowledge or attempting to make do with only partial knowledge.[12] I am thinking here of exercises which ask for a distinction to be made between the factual information presented in the discourse and the attitude of the speaker to that factual information; or of exercises such as summarising and oral discourse analysis which centre on the abstraction of the core message from the surrounding verbiage. I am thinking also of anticipation exercises where the interpreter is required to predict the likely trajectory of an argument from opening statements; or is asked to complete a speech, with its pragmatic function in mind and as closely approximate to the guessed domain, tone and feeling as the interpreter can achieve.

An important corollary of concentrated listening is the background knowledge the interpreter is able to bring to bear upon the process. This is where intellectual curiosity needs to be high and constantly

stimulated so as to be able to cope, for example, with technical subject matter where the native speaker's facility will be so much greater. Background knowledge should help to deepen analysis of message and assist the organisation between different elements of the speech, especially the passage from the general to the particular, the abstract to the concrete, the principle to the example, and of course, vice-versa. Background knowledge also implies to me the association of the situation in which a speech is made with knowledge of the words heard. In 'Reflections on the training of simultaneous interpreters: a metalinguistic approach', Claude Namy claims to ask his students before each interpreting session to respond to a checklist of rhetorical questions of the following kind: 'Who is the speaker? What is his nationality? What is his cultural background? What is he hoping to get out of the speech? What is the position of the government or organisation he represents?'[13] - and so on.

Using actual speeches from the television, radio or newspapers is probably a better way of promoting background knowledge than choosing journalistic articles or manufacturing speeches from the press. Danica Seleskovitch (1981) provides several examples[14], employing first a 1979 speech of President Carter during which he says:

> 'While considerable progress has been made in reducing the rate of growth in demand for energy, much more remains to be done if the U.S. is to meet its responsibility to reduce its demands for petroleum on the world market.'

Pay attention to the handling of 'to meet its responsibility' in this consecutive interpreting version into French:

> *Certes, nous avons accompli des progrès considérables et nous sommes arrivés à réduire le rythme d'accroissement de nos besoins en énergie mais il y a encore beaucoup à faire si les Etats Unis veulent respecter l'engagement qu'ils ont pris de réduire leurs achats de pétrole sur le marché mondial.*

Carter's speech in September 1979 refers to the Tokyo conference of June of that year when the top seven industrial countries fixed a ceiling on oil imports. This summit meeting is in everyone's mind at the time of the speech and that is why 'responsibility' becomes 'engagement'.

Background knowledge cannot always of course provide for every eventuality. I have said that the interpreter must make do often with partial knowledge, but if this partial knowledge is not pertinent, genuine interpretation may not be possible and the interpreter may have to settle for a decoding of the message rather than interpretation. Another example from a different Carter speech, quoted by Seleskovitch, is as follows:

'My instructions were to be here at three o'clock and I think I am right on time. But I think you all know that I've been providing employment for the Attorney-General for the last two years or so, as a favour to the people of Georgia [laughter] ... and the country and I think to keep him busy for a few moments is not out of keeping with our relationship in the past few months.'

The logic (sic) of the extract is that the President is on time, which seems, however, to contradict suggestions that the Attorney-General has been entertaining the public in the President's absence. What exactly does the statement mean that 'I have been providing employment for the Attorney-General', or the statement which makes the audience laugh - 'as a favour to the people of Georgia'. How would you find a TL equivalent to make a French or Spanish audience laugh? Without pertinent knowledge then, one may be able to decode but not interpret.

The third element of the consecutive interpreting process is the storing of information via memory and notes. I intend to deal in more detail with memory and note-taking at a later stage of this article. At this juncture I wish to demythify a little the traditional thinking originated by Rozan [15] and Herbert [16] in the 1950s that a symbolic or semi-symbolic system of note-taking is somehow essential to consecutive interpreting. Seleskovitch in 1975 showed that professional interpreters' notes use few symbols and though usually written in the TL were not always done in this way. [17] More important is memorisation, which will be the more reliable the greater the assimilation and analysis of the message. Improvement of memory appears to me to depend upon success, above all, in discovering the structure of an argument whether this is explicit, as for example when a speaker says: 'I support the government for three reasons: firstly ...; secondly ...; thirdly ...'; or more usually, implicit, when different points are made in a more discursive fashion. It is good practice for the memory quickly to recapitulate on the ideas already expressed as the speaker moves on to a new idea, not just to establish the structure or links but to prepare for reproduction. Note-taking provides an aid to the memory which ought to be able to manage quite substantial speeches, especially if they are not of a fact-filled nature, without resort to notes. Notes above all should supplement a grasp of the structure as well as being necessary for numbers, percentages, proper names, etc. But the less one takes notes the less one is tempted to rely upon notes rendering services which they cannot provide. The postponement of note-taking in consecutive interpreting in the early stages of learning, tempered by the commonsense in selecting material, is perhaps wise pedagogic practice.

The fourth stage of the process - reproduction of the message - involves more intellectual acrobatics: the oratorical powers to

command respectful attention without the imposition of the interpreter's personality on the speaker's. Learning to express oneself should also be about the communication of meaning and not just a reflection of linguistic competence. Expression can be improved on two levels: autonomous expression independent of the foreign language; and through direct corridors between one language and another - the acquisition of synonyms, ready-made expressions, breadth of vocabulary through the search for equivalents, etc. Mastery of set expressions as well as practice in formulating speeches of his own help the student to achieve an eloquence of delivery which is in any case inseparable from rapidity of comprehension. Concentrated listening has a role even at the reproduction stage in that the student must listen carefully and self-consciously to his own words even as he is uttering them in order to make sure they conform to what he is trying to say. Interference from the SL can be a major problem at this stage unless this self-control and self-conscious approach is sustained. Ensuring that the interpretation is an act of communication must be the guiding principle therefore right up to the end of the reproduction.

It is a common misconception among students beginning consecutive interpreting that somehow a photographic memory is essential to the exercise. Seleskovitch again states quite bluntly that memory is nothing more or less than understanding the sense behind the words. [18] She makes a distinction between verbal memory (i.e. remembering words) and non-verbal memory (i.e. remembering sense) which parallels her division between linguistic meaning and non-verbal sense. Verbal memory, which may last a few seconds and may suffice to remember a dozen or so words by heart, but certainly not a whole speech or a page in a book, only lasts long enough for the pertinent meanings of words to be identified. Once identified, meanings pass to the stage of ideation, a mental operation of amalgamation and synthesis of meanings in which sounds, verbal enunciations are not relevant. One passes to non-verbal sense.[19] Seleskovitch's verbal and non-verbal memory restates earlier studies of memory and corresponds to the difference between mechanical memory, i.e. memorising or repeating by rote, and logical memory, i.e. seeking out the principles or relationships in what is heard. Asked to memorise a numerical sequence such as 66357901 and to reproduce it later, the logical memory approach which sees that the first two and the last two digits 66 ... 01 reverse the date of the Battle of Hastings, while the middle four digits ... 3579 ... are a straight arithmetical progression, is more likely to retain the sequence than mere rote repetition. This kind of activity engages the short-term memory, or the immediate memory span, and it should be obvious not only that short-term retention is more successful the more active the form of engagement, but also that this form of memory lends itself to rapid forgetting. Indeed, some commentators believe it essential that the interpreter should unburden his/her short-term memory once the information has been processed.

The same could not be said of the long-term memory which also needs to be actively engaged in the interpreting process alongside the short-term. The long-term, or retentive memory involves the simultaneous addition to and drawing from the long-learned material which forms the interpreter's stock of knowledge. The emphasis once more is upon the active application of logical thinking to the memorisation process rather than upon passive registration. The simple memorising of items of vocabulary in the foreign language by rote repetition of the word and its equivalent will not be sufficient for appreciating a particular usage of the linguistic item in one of the many contexts which may occur in interpreting. This may be a statement of the obvious but it should alert us to the need to be concerned with the contextualisation of meaning in our foreign language learning. At the same time, intellectual and communicative habits which encourage a flexibility of recall in different contexts is bound to aid the learning process at the root of memorisation. It follows also from this that it must be stressed again that the development of a real interest in new material not just prior to the speech but even during the speech as the speech develops is likely to assist the interpreter's comprehension and memory. One could express this differently by saying that while practice in memorising does not of itself improve ability to learn, the conscious attempt to consider and experiment with one's own learning activities can lead to the development of improved memory.

Approaches toward note-taking ought really to follow the guidelines suggested for memory, bearing in mind of course that notes are designed to prompt short-term rather than long-term remembering. My own teaching and practical experience tell me that whatever system of signs or symbols one draws from, in the end the personal creation of each individual interpreter is the predominant governing factor. There are, however, certain cardinal principles that can maximise success. Note-taking, like memory, should respond to logical thinking so that the grouping of thoughts or ideas should be the paramount consideration of both. Group labelling in note-taking implies the clearest indication of the concatenation between different elements of a speech. Too often the beginner at interpreting records faithfully the different points elucidated in a speech but fails to establish the links between them. Here apparently unimportant link words and expressions - therefore, on the other hand, néanmoins, par conséquent, etc - help the interpreter to group-label the predominant thoughts and build up structure. Logical thinking dictates also that notes must be kept to a minimum, not merely because writing too many notes is bound to interfere with concentrated listening, but also because no comprehensive recall of each and every segment of the original speech, with all its redundancies, repetitions, elaborations of style, and inconsequentialities, can possibly compensate for a cohesive grasp of the essentials of meaning.

Finally a few words are needed about retroactive interference in the

consecutive interpreting process. By this is meant interference which occurs between the intake of information and the recalling of it - in other words, which blocks the short-term memory. Retroactive interference may be caused by external disturbances such as noises or visual interruptions, or by temporary discomforts such as cold, heat, etc. Such disturbances will not interfere with the long-term stock of knowledge but endanger immediate recall and must be minimised in the classroom as well as in the professional situation.

In concluding, I tender a few tentative and brief suggestions that may point to a practical classroom approach without reiterating the ideas found passim in this article. Firstly, I believe that consecutive interpreting as a language teaching exercise need not concentrate exclusively on interpretation into English but could include a judicious mix of work into and out of the foreign language; especially if, secondly, this is prefaced and occasionally accompanied by a wide variety of oral exercises working both ways between languages which place emphasis upon student input and self-criticism. Thirdly, considerable inter-class preparation - background tapes, reading, etc - should be an integral part of classroom practice. And, fourthly, ideally, and perhaps idealistically in some situations, the classes are likely to be the more successful and the more enjoyable for the student the more they are integrated with other foreign language teaching.

NOTES

1. Layton, A R: Interpreting and the communicative approach. This volume, p 69.

2. Kelly, L G: The true interpreter: a history of translation theory and practice in the West. Blackwell, 1979.

3. Anderson, B W: Interpreter roles and interpreter situations: cross-cutting typologies. Unpublished paper, University of Texas at Arlington, p 3.

4. Carroll, J B: Linguistic abilities in translators and interpreters. Language interpretation and communication, ed D Gerver and W Sinaiko. New York: Plenum Press, 1978. p 119-129.

5. ibid., p 123.

6. ibid., p 125.

7. ibid., p 125.

8. ibid., p 125.

9. Déjean Le Féal, K: 'L'enseignement des méthodes d'interprétation.' In: L'enseignement de l'interprétation et de la traduction, ed J Delisle. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1981, p 75-98.

10. ibid., p 78.

11. ibid., passim.

12. A point made inter al by D Seleskovitch, 'L'enseignement de l'interprétation.' In: ibid., p 23-45.

13. Namy, C: 'Reflections on the training of simultaneous interpreters: a metalinguistic approach'. In: Language interpretation and communication, ed D Gerver and W Sinaiko. New York: Plenum Press, 1978, p 32-33.

14. ibid., p 26-28. The examples quoted in the text and the main conclusions draw heavily upon this article.

15. Rozan, JF: La prise de notes en interprétation consécutive. Geneva: Librairie de l'Université Georg, 1956.

16. Herbert, J: The interpreter's handbook. Geneva: Librairie de L'Université Georg, 1952.

17. Seleskovitch, D: Langage, langues et mémoires: étude de la prise de notes en interprétation consécutive. Paris: Minard, 1975, passim.

18. ibid., p 11.

19. ibid., p 11.

4. A practical approach to consecutive interpreting in the fourth-year option

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PLACE OF INTERPRETING WITHIN THE SYLLABUS AT BATH

Interpreting is part of a final-year option with a vocational bias - the Professional Linguist Option. Total class contact time is low, therefore aims must be modest to be realistic. The interpreting part of the option aims to introduce students to the main varieties of interpreting - liaison or ad hoc, consecutive and finally simultaneous, in that order. Only one hour per week per language is available, so considerable private practice is essential to develop skills. Given these limitations the aim is to provide a foundation for further progress either through a postgraduate course or some sort of in-service training. It should be possible to give the talented beginner an opportunity to gauge the effort necessary to make the grade as a professional. For those whose talents or motivations lie elsewhere the effort is not wasted because many of the skills required by the interpreter are also exercised in different ways in other areas of intellectual activity, as Mike Townson (1985) [1] has pointed out.

Compared with the time or resources available to those on a course devoted entirely to interpreting this sort of option provides little opportunity for systematic training. On the EEC Commission training programmes I have seen classes where the interpreters outnumber the students - we all know that in Britain today, with student: staff ratios of 12:1 or worse, the teacher is unlikely even to have the assistance of a Lector; all the more reason therefore to avoid waste and to have a clear idea of what can be achieved.

I am going to be quite honest from the outset in stating my view that we cannot really teach students to interpret. I do not know of a method which, if applied consistently and conscientiously, will regularly and inevitably turn all students into interpreters. The best that one can do is to help promising students to develop the necessary skills, and in particular to try to make sure that they do not add unnecessarily to their own difficulties by acquiring bad habits at an early stage.

GROUP SIZE

In French the maximum group permissible is twelve students, not because of some magic significance attached to the number but

because we feel from experience that small group teaching is essential when the hourage is so low. To give each person a real opportunity to participate and also give them some personal attention in the class, rather than just record responses for subsequent monitoring, means a maximum group size of about ten to twelve. In addition, since we have only six booths for simultaneous interpreting, individuals in a class of twelve will be able to spend up to half an hour each in the booth.

SELECTION

The process of selection is fairly flexible but necessary. In principle all students can choose this final-year option freely, taking one of five mainly vocational options. Nevertheless, by a process of informal guidance, those who are thought to be weak linguistically are discouraged from selecting the Linguist option, so that in practice the group will comprise people with at least Upper Second potential in the practical language components of the course. This is important because we must expect good comprehension of the foreign language in order even to consider interpreting as a possibility. People will always be widening their vocabulary and developing new specialist areas of knowledge, but anybody who has difficulty at this stage in following a speech or article on current affairs of a general, political or social nature should not be admitted to the option.

STAGE AT WHICH CONSECUTIVE INTERPRETING IS INTRODUCED

Consecutive interpreting is introduced only after a few weeks of practice of liaison interpretation. This is for two reasons: firstly, because the two-way exchanges can be pitched at a relatively simple level to build up confidence, and secondly, because with liaison interpreting the student immediately sees the clearly demonstrated purpose of interpreting. Language work, from being a neutral solo exercise practised almost for its own sake, in academic isolation, becomes an act of communication; the linguist becomes a true mediator.

METHODS OF TEACHING CONSECUTIVE INTERPRETING

Can we isolate skills or strategies to assist and simplify our task? What can we learn from the mistakes of our students?

Firstly, that it is difficult! It has been described by Maurice Gravier (1968) as: 'la forme la plus noble peut-être de l'interprétation' [2]. Despite the dramatic and inevitable switch towards Simultaneous in international meetings with the development of new

technology, Consecutive is still fondly regarded by the 'Old Guard' and still used as a test by virtually all major employers of conference interpreters.

Yet, as we all know, there is no better way of learning than by success. The obvious solution of using very short passages and building up to longer speeches is fraught with dangers because as we have all discovered, the second lesson about Consecutive (true also for Simultaneous) is that word-for-word parroting is not only an ever-present temptation for the beginner, it is also the very negation of interpreting. The reasons why it is wrong have been rehearsed so often I do not need to go into them here. The point I am making is that, given the opportunity by a speech which is too short or delivered at an unnaturally slow speed, beginners will tend to repeat word-for-word with little attempt at comprehension. Success here is bought at too high a cost, if achieved at all.

Training exercises, therefore, need to be long enough to prevent total recall and to be delivered at a speed which reflects that of natural speech. At the same time they must not be so difficult as to demoralise. As always the teacher's task is a tightrope walking act.

What are the most common failures of students in the early stages of attempting Consecutive?

In my experience these can be categorised in two broad areas:

1. Lack of professionalism, a term I am using narrowly here to denote the rhetorical aspects of the job. Too often in concentrating on the content of a speech the student interpreter neglects the purpose of his or her intervention. The recipient of the message is forgotten or given scant attention while the interpreter stammers, groans, sighs, occasionally utters expletives, and peers at the notepad with the sort of close attention a myopic devotes to searching for a missing contact lens!

2. The failure to listen analytically. One can be pretty sure that an unusual word, a controversial statement, or a striking example will be carefully noted down and reproduced with photographic faithfulness. But all too often the point of the speech, the crucial conclusion, will be omitted with a casual 'Oh, I didn't get the last bit'.

How can we encourage beginners to trust their <u>memory</u> to provide the details to flesh out the skeleton? How can we coax them to write less and to listen more?

An approach with which I have experimented over the last few years

has been to try to simplify the tasks of the beginner by concentrating on key skills and attempting to reduce or remove additional contingent difficulties.

It is important to establish the rhetorical function at the very beginning of Consecutive training. The initial exercises should underline the fact that the interpreter is making a speech and is therefore attempting to communicate with the other people in the room. In the first few classes all the students are required to give short improvised speeches in English, the length of each being about two minutes. After each speech one or two people are asked to reproduce it, also in English. Nobody is allowed to take notes. The aim is to eliminate problems of comprehension, to establish the habit of listening for meaning without the distraction of thinking about specific translation difficulties. In this way the exercise is simplified to its bare bones - using largely improvised source material, to be interpreted English to English.

Some preparation is necessary - topics need to be chosen and researched by the speakers beforehand, yet they should not be allowed to read from a script. The interpreters will thus benefit from optimum conditions, no language problems, a range of paralinguistic communication features characteristic of normal speech acts, and finally, subject matter which lies within their experience. In these circumstances success is possible and the performer can be encouraged to think of performance skills in giving the interpretation.

Graduating the difficulty of source material is a problem when the teacher has little control over the speeches given, but I would argue that this is not a serious handicap at the initial stage when most of the material is simple. Length can be controlled to a limited degree and most students are well able to give a largely improvised talk for about two or three minutes. In making their speeches the students are also able to concentrate on rhetorical features, on the structure of the argument and clarity of exposition. At this stage, and also later after note-taking has been introduced, video-recording of the performances can be rewarding. Voice projection, eye contact, avoidance of annoying mannerisms: these and other similar performance points can be made most effectively with video.

It is also vital to instil the habit of finishing the interpretation. Anyone who is allowed to stop when in difficulties rather than think their way out of trouble will be gaining little or nothing from the practice exercise. There should be constant reminders that they have a responsibility to the delegates listening.

The second stage will involve the introduction of French source material in a similar way to the earlier English speeches. It is

almost inevitable that the inherent content-related difficulties will be reduced for a while as most students will be less confident and less fluent in French; the interpreters will thus have no problems with the switch.

Preparation is important. People need to know exactly what is expected of them, so it is useful here to introduce themes so that a more realistic context is developed. Several speeches will be prepared presenting different viewpoints around a central issue - anything topical or controversial will do - which class members will have had an opportunity to research. Gradually the length of the speeches can be increased, and once these exceed about three minutes student interpreters will find that their long-term memories are struggling to cope. But, on the positive side, they will have learned that they can remember an astonishing amount, not only of the general lines of an argument, but also of the detail. I am convinced that this confidence and the habit of listening for the signposts are essential prerequisites for the acquisition of a useful note- taking technique.

It is only at this point that pens and paper are allowed. It is also at this point that it can be helpful to illustrate what is required. Here again video can be a useful aid to show a professional at work. Then the relationship between the source speech and the notes taken can be discussed, as well as the use made of the notes when the interpreter reads them back. I find it advisable to demonstrate widely differing styles of note-taking to discourage the inference that only one approach will work. The most obvious differences will be between those which make extensive use of symbols and those which are word-based. Pure examples of either are rare, so both styles can profitably be discussed and students encouraged to develop their own, taking what seems useful to them.

It is interesting and, I think, significant that no-one has attempted to supplant Rozan's (1956) [3] short guide which remains, to my knowledge, the only systematic introduction to note-taking techniques in either French or English. Its major shortcoming lies in its attempt to provide a universal system and to replace some of the interpreter's own analytical listening with something which is far too exhaustive for most people to manage successfully. However, the attempt to provide a number of general principles is helpful and worthwhile as a starting point, as are the comments on symbols. Although Rozan warns against the use of too many symbols, some would feel that his method nevertheless relies too heavily on them.

Whether the interpreter relies on ideograms or abbreviations for the form of the notes, one aspect must be emphasised. The logical pattern of the speech must be recorded. Listening for structure should have been instilled at the first stage, and if the purpose of that early breakdown of tasks is to be realised then one must hope for a

pay-off in the willingness to wait for meaning to develop and for the links in an argument to emerge. The layout of the notes on the page has to facilitate the rapid identification of those features so that the interpreter can see at a glance where the argument is going. A student who is frantically trying to note every phrase or word will have no chance to order the notes and will find great difficulty in recreating a speech from the jumble of linear hieroglyphics. Where this approach, based on analytical listening, runs into problems is where meaning is dense with factual material - lists of names or commodities, statistics, dates - these are familiar bugbears for interpreters, and as far as I can see there are no easy answers. One can give the usual homilies about access to documentation beforehand, but the fact remains that interpreters will often have to cope in less than ideal circumstances.

Various note-taking strategies can be devised for abbreviating names of countries (e.g. international car registrations) or large numbers, and it is well worthwhile devoting practice sessions to such detailed points. Inevitably, however, there will be occasions when such information is missed. Then the constant reminder has to be given that the interpreter has a responsibility to both sides in the communication process. In Consecutive there is an advantage over Simultaneous in that being in the room with delegates gives the interpreter the opportunity to impose a pace on the meeting and to ask for matters of substance to be repeated. But this advantage should not be abused, since the delays caused will only slow down what is already a fairly laborious procedure, causing frustration and annoyance.

So, for coping with numbers, which seem to provide more difficulty than anything else, there are two guiding principles. Firstly, to concentrate on the order of magnitude, using commonsense to help, but bearing in mind that inflation rates in Israel or Argentina might seem to defy such normal expectations. Secondly, to think of the reasons why the statistics are being quoted. Looking for the meaning will often allow the interpreter to gauge the relative importance of various numbers and judge whether a rounding up or down is appropriate, or even some paraphrase such as 'a huge increase' or 'a relatively slow decline', etc.

Obviously, the material used for the more advanced stages will need to be suited to the progress of the students and one can no longer rely on impromptu or prepared contributions by the class. Specialised exercises designed to practise individual skills can be tailor-made, but for normal practice sessions genuine source material from EEC or Council of Europe sources can readily be adapted. Real speeches are almost always more useful than newspaper articles or other written language sources.

Yet again, towards the end of the course, video-recording is a use-

ful way of re-emphasising performance details and of retaining a source of formality, too often lacking in the relaxed intimacy of a small group.

It will be clear from my outline that there are more effective ways of training interpreters than the minimal programme I have described. Such methods would allow a far higher number of class contact hours, the use of colloquial assistants and the organisation of mock conferences to provide more realistic contexts for the interpreter's work. Within the framework of a broadly based European Studies degree, however, there is room for a modest component which can build on the skills and general culture acquired earlier, and introduce some students to the practical applications of their work.

In my concluding remarks I must acknowledge that the approach I have described seems to have little bearing on the central theme of our Conference: 'Interpreting as a language teaching technique', for my guiding principle has been to keep uppermost in the student's mind the role of the interpreter and an understanding of the responsibilities of the work; in short, the need for professionalism. This emphasis follows naturally, I think, from the relatively narrow aims of the final-year option, but it also reflects my view that Consecutive is a performing skill which requires much more than language competence.

NOTES

1. Townson, Mike: Interpreting isn't everything: other interlanguage skills. This volume, p 57.

2. Preface to D Seleskovitch: L'interprète dans les conférences internationales. Paris: Minard, 1968, p III.

3. Rozan, J-F: La prise de notes en interprétation consécutive. Geneva: Librairie de l'Université Georg, 1956.

5. Teaching simultaneous interpreting in French and German

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Pat Longley, for many years head of the conference interpreting course at the Polytechnic of Central London (PCL), described the nature of an interpreter's work in the following terms: '... the essence of the job ... consists in concentrated listening, absorbing information and reproducing it in a form which is comprehensible to others'.[1] Any specific definition of simultaneous interpreting would have to include a reference to the imperative of speed, over which the interpreter has little control. This, especially when coupled to specific structural problems, makes great demands on a person's ability to seize the essential meaning of a statement and to find an appropriate, and often entirely different, rendering.

German particularly presents these problems of structure. The following is an actual example:

> *Herr Vorsitzender, wir zogen der Klarheit wegen die Kosten, die im Laufe des Wirtschaftsjahres 75/6 entstanden sind - es handelt sich dabei um ca. Dm 15.6 Mio - hinzu.* Such a statement would probably be rendered roughly along the lines: 'Chairman, for the sake of clarity we added (in) the costs which accumulated during 75/6. We're talking about roughly DM 15.6 million.'

Under the tension of such statements an interpreter will not really know when the verbal prefix is coming; the speaker here put in the actual sums of money involved and the timescale. Hence the prefix was postponed for a considerable time. These statements are well-known for causing alarm among interpreters - especially when one is feeling tired - for several reasons: the sentences contain facts which are important to the listener and thus cannot be left out. Because they are interposed, they make any anticipation of the final form of the full verb *(hinzuziehen)* very risky. Trying to wait until the full verb is given may lead to leaving out the information contained in the figures/dates. In simultaneous interpreting an assessment of the situation has to be made at high speed. Often the subject matter is highly technical and the interpreter cannot rely on common sense in guessing what the verb will be - in this case the delegate was referring to documents which the interpreters had not been given, a far too frequent occurrence in the EEC.

All languages, not only German, occasionally present great problems for interpreters trying to find a meaningful equivalent for speakers of other languages. The essential meaning has to be seized upon at

high speed and rapid language/concept substitution has to operate. Thus in simultaneous interpreting such operations are of much more acute difficulty than in other interpreting modes. One or two examples might include: *La rentrée sociale sera très mouvementée cette année*, or *Giscard fera sa rentrée politique au mois de septembre'*. Well-known landmarks and concepts to one linguistic culture will mean little or nothing to another culture. Consider the following random examples:

1. *Der Vorschlag wurde zum ersten Mal auf der Hardthöhe unterbreitet.* How many non-native speakers of German are going to associate *Hardthöhe* with the German Ministry of Defence?

2. *Place du Colonel Fabien on a discuté de cette affaire pendant toute la journée. Place du Colonel Fabien* may not be readily recognisable by many outsiders to France as the Headquarters of the French Communist Party.

Similar problems may be caused by particular words which are so much part of the daily reality of one linguistic entity that they automatically surface in meetings: an example which has nothing to do with a particular place might be *décrispation*, so frequently used in French political circles. Some concepts have a long history and have, in the translations applied to them outside their own immediate area of usage, undergone quite extensive permutations. *Mitbestimmung* is just one such example. Such words require the interpreter to have an extensive 'toolkit' of rough and ready substitutes. Many might say that 'industrial democracy' might be the most elegant translation of *Mitbestimmung* today. However, the simultaneous interpreter has to deal with the concept with only a second to think. An ugly monstrosity like 'co-determination' (one of the older English attempts to render *Mitbestimmung*) may win no prizes for aesthetic quality but will probably serve to keep the listener in the picture, which is what the whole object of the exercise is.

Clearly then high speed absorption of information and reproduction, using rapid word-substitution techniques, are the skills called for in simultaneous interpreting. Behind the terms 'absorption of information' and 'reproduction' lie the two basic activities of aural and oral facility.

Initial training for simultaneous interpreting will often consist in the extensive use of two exercises, both of which involve the use of a written source and the development of the oral facility. These two exercises are translation at sight and reformulation.

The purpose of translation at sight is two-fold: to develop an appreciation of the speed necessary in simultaneous interpreting and to make students aware that the exact, translation-based approach is quite wrong in a simultaneous situation. Due to the factor of speed

a crisp reproduction of the message is necessary and this involves renderings which are often probably not so exact or ideal as a written translation demands.

Reformulation consists in the rewording of the sentences of the original text, taking care to preserve the essential meaning and to work as fast as possible. Though this exercise seems at first glance to have little to do with the activities of the simultaneous interpreter it helps students to develop confidence in their ability to find those rough and ready substitutes mentioned earlier. The relevance of this to the actual practice of simultaneous interpreting can be seen when one considers that interpreters, confronted by an expression whose meaning they fully grasp, will often still not be able to conjure up the ideal equivalent which they may know does exist in their working language. It is at this point that the extensive 'toolkit' of words is needed.

Both of these exercises can be used whether the interpreter has only one working language or more than one. Practical experience shows that it is by no means an easy or quick process to get students to adjust to an approach which is not based on translation. Sometimes it proves impossible and often it can require a whole academic term.

At this point certain types of exercise involving the actual use of booths should be possible:

a. The aim must be to teach the mastery of the skills of listening, understanding and speaking at the same time. Ideally, students should work in pairs in their booths, one checking the other. At the beginning two activities can be performed on the following lines: the teacher - or someone else - makes a short, general statement of up to two minutes at the console. In the booth the student reads an article on any subject out of some magazine/ newspaper in the same language. The second student observes the articulation, comprehensibility and flow of the reader's performance. Afterwards the reader is asked to summarise briefly the essentials of the console statement. Appropriate comments follow, from both teacher and the student monitor, and then the roles of monitor and reader are reversed. Often the reader who is very articulate and fluent has concentrated too much on the article and has a very imperfect idea of the contents of the statement from the console. Equally, the opposite can be true, the recall of the console statement being excellent at the cost of good articulation etc during the reading. This exercise can be varied since any intensive repetition soon palls.

b. A useful variant which aims to train the same basic skills as already mentioned consists in short statements made at the console and the students' repeating what they hear verbatim. The student should take care, however, to leave a gap of at least three quarters

of a sentence between the original and the repetition. This gap is crucial to train simultaneous listening and speaking. The monitor needs only to use the simple device of nudging the performer if the latter gets too close to the original. The monitor should note, as under point (a), articulation, flow and degree of language interference. This last factor is likely to be more pronounced in this exercise than in the first. Considerable unwanted gaps can also occur as the student tries to maintain the necessary gap between his/her own version and the original.

The next stage may profitably shift the emphasis towards the development of the oral dexterity required.

c. Confidence should be built up in the student's ability to find substitute words and phrases, still within one language. A console speaker makes a short statement of up to, say, two minutes and the student reproduces the sentences, as near as possible on a sentence-by-sentence basis, in different words. This is a purely oral version of reformulation at sight, based on a written text. This exercise, however, is very important for any training in simultaneous interpreting since it forces the student to be aware of a speaker's drift before embarking on any rendering. This is particularly important for languages such as German which present problems of word-order for English speakers. The student monitor's task here is to watch that the performer produces articulate, complete sentences and that the main content is clear to him/her as a listener. Cassette recordings can be useful here so that the students can listen to themselves afterwards.

d. A final, preparatory exercise is very much related to the last one, involving as it does reproduction of the essential content of the original in different words. The only difference is that the student can reformulate on a less restricted basis than that involving a purely sentence-by-sentence approach. At this stage, probably after about four sessions, it is time to attempt short extracts from one language into another. Using the same working methodology as outlined above - one student monitoring the other with the teacher also often able to do so, either on the spot or with a cassette of the student performance afterwards - the teacher takes care that the initial statements remain at about two minutes. As with all the previous stages, the statements should only be given at normal conversational speed and preferably from brief headings, rather than from a full text. This is to ensure that the density and speed of presentation are not too great, since the student must gain confidence at the start. The length of statement should only gradually be increased.

What has been described above could apply to any student of simultaneous interpreting, of any linguistic background and learning simultaneous interpreting with any combination of languages. At

this point, however, certain limiting assumptions must be made for the purpose of the specific subject addressed by the title 'interpreting as a language teaching technique'. One must define the students in question, what their language competence is and define exactly the meaning of 'language teaching'. It is assumed here, firstly, that students are native speakers of English, secondly, that their linguistic competence in their foreign languages excludes their using these as working languages in simultaneous interpreting and, thirdly, that in this assessment of simultaneous interpreting as a language teaching technique, one is dealing with the teaching of the foreign language, not with the English mother tongue. Pat Longley notes, concerning the prospective candidates for the interpreting course at the PCL: '... the greater number of applicants are university graduates. With rare exceptions they have not acquired a sufficient command of their foreign languages and frequently do not know how to use their own.'[2] Therefore, it follows that any realistic use of simultaneous interpreting in the British system of higher education - to which this analysis addresses itself - always concerns work from the foreign language into the mother tongue, i.e. English.

Having seen what simultaneous interpreting demands by way of practical skills, it is now necessary to define what areas are taught by British higher education language courses which are broadly speaking of the modern, applied kind. Three areas may be mentioned which are common to all such courses: aural and oral skills, and background studies. It is helpful to break these headings down so that any link with simultaneous interpreting becomes clearer.

Aural work attempts to familiarise students with vocabulary, idioms, register and grammar. Oral work aims to expand the students' use of all these with increasing speed and accuracy. In background studies lectures and seminars are often given in the relevant foreign language; this exposes students not only to the aural elements mentioned but also, as a development of vocabulary, to specific and extensive word-fields. This is specially true if a particular area, say the German press, is looked at over a whole term.

Bearing in mind the description of simultaneous interpreting as an activity and the broad categories covered by language departments, one can see that simultaneous interpreting affects the aural component but not the oral. It could also be used in the area of background studies. In aural skills simultaneous interpreting can be useful because it allows intensive passive exposure to word-fields and idioms. For example, vocabulary sheets can be distributed in advance and can cover topics which are not necessarily those which fall under the heading background studies. These are normally conceived of as studies focussing on the context of one country. For example, there are topics such as the implications of the Western European-Soviet gas pipeline deal, or the events surrounding Erich

Honecker's projected visit to the Federal Republic of Germany and its cancellation due to Soviet pressure, which can be seen as being under the shadow of the superpower Cold War. When one considers that background studies normally remain within the focus of the nation-state - for example, a study of a country's geographical variations, its political parties, etc - one can see that the examples just cited do not quite fit into that category. Actual background studies, though, can easily be accommodated to the same methods of intensive, though passive, exposure to word-fields. Furthermore, statements from the console can be made with explicit reference to old or new aspects of these studies, thus bringing in the actual communication of subject content. In the framework of the system of working in pairs one student could interpret the material, while another could summarise in brief note form what he/she hears, on the basis of the interpretation given by the fellow student. These notes could then be written up by the students, a good retention exercise in itself, and given to staff who would compare the written summaries with what they had originally said during the simultaneous interpreting hour.

Situations promoting awareness of stylistic variation (persuasion, anger, politeness, etc) can easily be worked into statements in simultaneous interpreting. All of this develops passive familiarity with the foreign language, some of which certainly becomes evident when the student actually uses the foreign language, rather as one's active use of a language, its structures and vocabulary, is definitely improved by radio listening.

A mock conference situation is a very intensive form of the principles of language, and content, reinforcement outlined above. At Salford, a postgraduate course involving non-native speakers of English who have two working languages has been initiated. Students are both interpreters and delegates and prepare, in briefest note form only, statements on key topics in both languages. Extra familiarity with specific vocabulary is assured if students have to prepare glossaries for their fellow students before the conference. However, it must again be stressed that the active foreign language command of the vast majority of native English speakers simply precludes the possibility of a mock conference as a vehicle for language and content instruction.

In conclusion, two points emerge when one limits an assessment of simultaneous interpreting to native British students. Firstly, virtually all the uses of simultaneous interpreting for language acquisition can be adequately, or better, covered by other modes of interpreting. For example, liaison interpreting is a very effective way of drilling vocabulary and idioms both actively and passively since students are able to work both into and out of the foreign language without the absolute imperative of speed, which an original speaker dictates in simultaneous interpreting. Liaison work can be

very intensive if students use prepared dialogues in the language laboratory. Secondly, if one wishes to reinforce background studies, both liaison and consecutive could be used, the students having to write up the content of what they had heard after each session.

With any mode of interpreting used as a reinforcement technique there are, however, within the British higher education system, some major constraints. Unless the mode is one common to all students, reinforcement via interpreting could be seen as favouring one group of students who happen to be doing interpreting. At such universities as Salford, liaison forms an obligatory part of all students' final year if they are reading two modern languages to honours degree level. However, this is by no means the case in every other institution. Liaison may there be an option only. Simultaneous, with its substantially different characteristics from other modes of interpreting - immediacy of response at precisely the tempo dictated by the speaker - is certainly not feasible for most students in any year unless success in simultaneous is an obligatory part of an institution's degree course. This, though, would mean a very small intake initially or a very high elimination rate early in the course. In such a rare case simultaneous interpreting could certainly reinforce aural and background studies. Even here, however, simultaneous work into the foreign language would hardly be a viable option. It appears, therefore, to be at least questionable whether simultaneous interpreting presents any advantages over other modes in helping language teaching. I believe that the crucial factor explaining this is the inability of the vast majority of British students to use the foreign language in a way at all approximating to the demands of simultaneous interpreting. This situation is very unlikely to change.

NOTES

1. Longley, P: 'An integrated programme for training interpreters.' In: Language interpretation and communication; D Gerver and H Wallace Sinaiko eds. New York: Plenum Press, 1978, p 46.

2. Longley, P: ibid., p 47.

6. Ad hoc interpreting as a teaching technique for German

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If we are to look at ad hoc interpreting as a teaching technique on undergraduate courses in applied language studies, we must not only look at the learning objectives but also analyse how learning takes place. As the former point has been covered elsewhere, I shall concentrate in this article on some problematic aspects of the latter.

Where ad hoc interpreting is used as a teaching technique, we presuppose, as we do with other exercises at undergraduate level including translation, a certain minimum level of vocabulary and some ability to cope with syntax both in terms of comprehension and for active use. As in the case of translation, a seemingly reasonable expectation might have been that students would find it more difficult to interpret into German than into their mother tongue, English. However, this is by and large not borne out in practice and students themselves have confirmed this in discussions and through questionnaire returns over some years. There appear to exist two recurring problems in the language skills areas covered by ad hoc interpreting, as seen by students. Firstly, comprehension of spoken German, a skills area which is not always fully represented on degree courses and suitably tested in final examinations.[1] However, comprehension difficulties occur in the foreign language (when students interpret into their mother tongue) and for some students these difficulties are equal to the difficulties encountered in the active use of the foreign language. It follows that some of the weaker students find interpreting into English as difficult as interpreting into German and in extreme cases very weak students interpret better into the foreign language than into their mother tongue, for without comprehension there can be no interpreting.

The second problem that students themselves are aware of manifests itself in a mental block being created by a word or expression, either in their mother tongue or in the foreign language, that is unusual or complex: they have understood and realise that the exact equivalent or term they believe is required is not available to them at that moment. The students know what they ought to do in this case, but nonetheless a problem may arise because instead of accepting this realisation and looking for solutions elsewhere they try to 'will' the term or phrase into their consciousness. However, as they start searching around in the hope the elusive expression may miraculously occur to them (most unlikely in such a stress situation),

they realise that whether it does come to them or not, the remainder of the spoken passage has meantime slipped from their memory so that finding the missing expression that caused the hold-up in the first place now becomes quite irrelevant. Time and again students run into this problem, even where alternatives in the language are readily available to them. Students themselves have explained that as they try so hard 'to get it right', they either do not dare or do not want to look for what many of them have termed in questionnaire replies as 'second best solutions'. Maybe second best only as long as students, when interpreting, aim at the standards and objectives of translating as perceived by them?

Related to this problem is the students' general preference for translating over interpreting, and not just at the level of specific expressions or phrases. The students will use their memory to try to retain all details including those of syntax and even word order (disastrous in the case of German), will battle on (and be proud of their good memory) until either the remainder has actually lapsed from memory (and there is at this stage no alternative but to ask for a repeat), or an unfamiliar term or expression diverts the attention away from the self-set task of memorising, towards the possibly unproductive search for the exact equivalent.

An attempt to translate may ruin the students' performance in the target language just as in the base language, as two examples from one student's recent performance illustrate: the German speaker's *wir brauchen ein Auto, das ein höheres Mass an Sicherheit garantiert* is rendered into English as 'a car which a greater amount of safety guarantees'. When the English speaking interviewer enquires about the speed limit on German motorways, the student is not sure about the word *Geschwindigkeit* when looking for an exact translation. No other solution is contemplated, e.g. *Sie dürfen nicht so schnell fahren/müssen sich beim Fahren an eine gewisse Grenze halten/es ist verboten, schneller zu fahren als* ..., and a complete breakdown of communication occurs. Interestingly, when asking for a repeat the student says: 'I've forgotten' instead of 'you are using a term which I don't know in German', which might be another indication of the influence translation exerts on the student resulting in the inability to treat language as a flexible friend.

To evaluate this type of failure on the part of applied language studies students we need to remind ourselves that by the time they are in their final year when most of the ad hoc interpreting takes place, the students have spent a year abroad, have had the opportunity to attend conversation classes for over two years and have successfully participated orally in language classes, discussions and other usages of the spoken word. Add to this that after years of practice in précis and aural summary writing the students are also familiar with one of the basic demands made on them by interpreting,

i.e. to get to the crux of the matter and express it in terms most appropriate to the particular exercise. Why is it that nonetheless under stress many students tend to lapse into translating instead of identifying the essential ideas in one language and rendering them in the other by whatever means the language offers them?

I believe that here lies a stumbling block for the achievement of good bilateral communication, both spoken and written, good oral work and good interpreting: the students appear to have been conditioned into believing that translation is the be all and end all. It is true that translation into and out of the foreign language has been practised throughout the years of the degree course and ranks amongst the most important task and test areas. However, if we examine the aims implicit in the conduct of translation classes and as perceived by the students, we may find that translation is the overriding goal, not communication, not language learning nor conveying of content or message, but translation. This, as far as I can remember, has been an objective that has not been seriously challenged. Until we examine it and possibly bring a revised set of objectives to translation classes and a better balance to courses as a whole, we may be saddled with translation getting in the way of effective oral communication including ad hoc interpreting.

NOTES

1. Even in 1984, there are on the Ealing postgraduate secretarial linguist course graduates in German from some UK universities for whom an hour's lecture or language class conducted entirely in the foreign language is a new experience taxing their comprehension skills considerably.

7. Liaison interpreting problems specific to Italian

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The aim of a liaison interpreting programme is to develop communicative competence in the student. At the basis of 'communicative competence' is the ability of student-interpreters to learn the 'rules' or patterns (phonological, syntactic and semantic) of a language and to apply them in both encoding and decoding situations.

In addition to a mastery of these rules and an awareness of the differences between the grammar and lexis of mother tongue and foreign language, 'communicative competence' implies also an understanding of a number of other factors which impinge on an act of speech. Such factors include a wide range of social and cultural associations of which the foreign language student must be aware if his/her performance in liaison interpreting is to reach fluency. Take, for example, the Italian word *sottogoverno:* in my experience, English students usually interpret it literally as 'sub-government', but this does not help the native English hearer to fully understand what the Italian speaker means by *sottogoverno.*[1] Without sufficient knowledge of the socio-cultural aspects of both the native and the foreign country the student-interpreter will frequently fail to communicate the meaning of an utterance and its significance for the speech community in question.

Other aspects of communication which the student must be familiar with are gestures and facial expressions. The Italian who taps his midriff with the side of his hand or draws the fingertips of one hand towards his mouth as he says *È l'una, andiamo* provides an additional meaning to the utterance which the English student must communicate to the listener if he is to be a truly effective interpreter. In a liaison interpreting programme the speakers can easily and realistically introduce these paralinguistic elements as they would be naturally found in a 'normal' communication situation.

The problems for the liaison interpreting students aspiring to a high degree of fluency are considerable. The quality of their performance will be assessed on the basis of a number of criteria which will include phonological competence, an accurate command of syntax and a wide range of semantic strategies which are influenced to a large extent by extra-linguistic factors. With these criteria in mind, it may be helpful to isolate certain difficulties which clearly influence performance and which must be overcome by English-speaking students of Italian.

Reference has already been made to the phonological features of the L2 and to their importance as an aspect of fluency. It is possible to identify recurrent deficiencies in students' pronunciation, stress and intonation which contribute to a weak phonological performance in liaison interpreting. A problem that the student of Italian often encounters is how to pronounce double consonants. There is a clear distinction for Italians between *canone* (rent) and *cannone* (cannon), *ano* (anus) and *anno* (year) and unless the student is able to make this distinction the risk of misinterpretation is very high, as many of my own undergraduates have discovered to their embarrassment.

Another difficulty that may occur has to do with stress patterns in Italian, since faulty stress can change the meanings of individual words and easily confuse the listener. This can be seen from the pair *sùbito* (immediately) and *subìto* (undergone) or the pair *mèta* (goal) and *metà* (half).

However, as has been argued by Agard and Di Pietro (1965), the cardinal phonological sin is not faulty stress or faulty consonants but faulty intonation.[2] There is little doubt that the intonation pattern of an utterance is one of the key discriminative cues, and not only must the student-interpreter be able to select and produce a range of appropriate intonations but he must also be able to recognise all the intonation patterns of the L2. In the case of final year undergraduate liaison interpreting students, I find few instances of badly chosen intonation in Italian; by this stage of the course, students are usually well able to use the correct patterns and there is little evidence of interference from English. What does sometimes occur, however, is a failure by the student to differentiate between a question and a statement from the native Italian speaker. A student who is about to interpret from the L2 into English will, on occasion, first check the Italian with the query: *'Mi scusi, è una domanda o no?'* or else, *'Scusi, ha fatto qualche domanda o mi sbaglio?'* As stated by Agard and Di Pietro, 'native-speaking listeners have of course acquired a powerful automatic reaction to another's intonation'[3]; FL students do not have such automaticity and when they are faced with the task of interpreting extended pieces of conversation they may experience difficulty in retaining all the significant cues that are essential to a successful interpretation of the message. This difficulty is most conspicuous when students are confronted by new subject matter and/or an unfamiliar situational context and social roles. One hopes, however, that from this phonological problem students will learn an important lesson about the complexity of language behaviour, particularly the inter-relation of the phonological, syntactic and semantic aspects of the language.

It is my opinion that the strength of a liaison interpreting programme is that it provides students with the opportunity to

develop and use the L2 in all its forms (phonological, syntactic and semantic). In the area of syntax the aim is to encourage the student to develop his generative skills but also to increase his awareness of the overlap between the syntactic and semantic and phonological components. Agard and Di Pietro have this to say about foreign language learning: '... the student reacts to the learning of a new language largely in terms of behaviour patterns imposed by his own language. In other words, he sees the structure of the foreign language through the filter of his in-built native habits; and whether or not he 'knows grammar', he is led to commit errors chiefly in those areas where the two languages are structured differently'.[4] Every language has its own ways of combining grammatical parts in its sentences and the difference between English and Italian can cause problems for the learner, especially when there is a correlation between position and meaning. For example, the most frequent position of adjectives in Italian is after the noun they qualify *(un vestito bianco, il popolo italiano)*, which is the opposite of English. This in itself is unlikely to be a problem for the student but what does sometimes cause difficulty is the choice of position in Italian which often leads to a change in meaning. For example, the adjectives *bello, nuovo, povero, buono, vecchio, grande* etc have different meanings according to position: *Vorrei sapere il prezzo della lavastoviglie grande* (I'd like to know the price of the large dishwasher, i.e. not the smaller one); *vorrei sapere il prezzo della grande lavastoviglie* (the great dishwasher).

A habit which does not come easily to the English speaker is the use of the definite article in contexts where in English either no article at all would be required or else the indefinite article would be used. I find myself constantly correcting such mistakes in Italian as *vorrei presentare signora Smith* (let me introduce Mrs Smith), *in 1984* (in 1984). In both cases the definite article should have been included. Conversely, students frequently include the article in cases which Italian does not permit. For example, in expressions with the possessive denoting family relationships: *la mia moglie* (my wife) or *il suo fratello* (his brother) etc instead of *mia moglie, suo fratello* etc.

Italian, rather more frequently than English, avoids the passive in favour of the *si* construction. Students, however, often make the mistake of carrying over into Italian the English passive which results in such ungrammatical utterances as:

il giornalista viene dato un lavoro importante.

With regard to the *si* construction, students tend to equate the indefinite *si* with the English 'one', but there is no real English counterpart to *si*. Instead, students should learn how it functions in Italian passive and impersonal constructions and not think of it

in terms of an English equivalent. Grammatical errors of the type:

si deve uccidere gli uccelli
and
si fa vari tipi di lavoro

which occur not infrequently in liaison interpreting classes are made, I would say, by students who fail to organise the utterances according to the rules of the L2.

Other common error types which are due to interference from English are the following:

1. Using the wrong tense sequence in conditional sentences, e.g. *sarebbe meglio se i padri potrebbero lavorare.*
2. Using the indicative mood instead of the subjunctive, e.g. *pensa che c'è bisogno di molta acqua.*
3. The misuse of prepositions resulting from an attempt to find lexical equivalence, e.g. *l'ho visto sulla televisione; non voleva ammettere a questo.*

The examples above do not constitute an exhaustive list of the syntactic difficulties encountered by the English student of Italian in liaison interpreting. I have cited them because they represent some of the most common recurrent errors and because they are greatly influenced by source-language syntax. It must also be said that in liaison interpreting the student-interpreter suffers certain disadvantages of time and situation which may result in a performance which is grammatically imperfect but which in semantic terms is competent.

Indeed, it can be argued that the semantic component is the key factor in differentiating between the performance of one student-interpreter and another. Certainly the importance of the semantic component in fluency needs to be stressed since the student-interpreter's communicative skill will be significantly affected by it. The semantic component reflects to a large extent the social and cultural background of speakers of a given language. It is also influenced by subject matter and by the intentions of the speaker. This demands an awareness on the student's part of different types of language behaviour and an ability to use such variations appropriately. The student-interpreter must be equipped with the verbal strategies to cope with a wide range of disparate sociolinguistic situations. He/she must be able at the same time to derive 'meaning' from spoken English and Italian and to express 'meaning' in English and Italian in terms which are intelligible and acceptable to the hearer. For example, in a discussion on the problem of animal pollution, the interpreter who refers to the 'health hazards of dog excrement in public places' as *il pericolo della merda depositata dai cani nei luoghi pubblici* fails to match the verbal

content of the Italian to the English utterance. Similarly, in a discussion on the history of tourism, the student-interpreter who referred to the coach carrying holidaymakers across the sands in eighteenth century Morecambe as *un pullman* failed because of his lack of semantic awareness, as did the one who interpreted the request of the English skier wanting to hire boots as *il signore desidera noleggiare un paio di stivali.*

A weak semantic performance in the L2 can be the result of interference from English referred to earlier. In liaison interpreting the phenomenon of lexical borrowing is not uncommon: *polluzione* (for *inquinamento,*) *fresco* (for *affresco*), *forma* (for *modulo*), *firma* (for *ditta*), *simpatia* (for *compassione*) are all recently heard examples of errors made on the basis of false lexical equivalence. The problem here may simply be one of poor vocabulary but quite often a student who makes this type of error during a liaison interpreting class will previously (e.g. in written translation, in free discussion) have used the correct lexical item in Italian. As stated earlier, the liaison interpreting exercise places the student in a situation which tests simultaneously all aspects of language under conditions which, through the technique of role play, are as similar as possible to 'real' communicative acts. Such intensive practice in the meaningful use of language inevitably places a strain on students who are well aware that a less than competent performance on their part could easily lead to a breakdown in communication between the participants. On the basis of my experience, I would suggest therefore that, in order to avoid extensive pauses or gaps in their performance, students who are experiencing some difficulty (linguistic or psychological) in encoding the L2 will, in the anxiety of the moment, sometimes resort to lexical loans.

The influence of native-language habits will decrease if the patterns (phonological, syntactic, semantic) of the foreign language are frequently practised in the context of a realistic communication situation such as that offered by liaison interpreting. As a method of language instruction, liaison interpreting is a demanding programme but a very rewarding one for the student who can profit greatly from the opportunity to practise in a single exercise all the aspects of fluency.[5]

NOTES

1. All the examples quoted in this chapter are taken from my own notes on the performance of third and fourth year undergraduate students in Liaison Interpreting classes.

2. Agard, Frederick B and Robert J Di Pietro: The sounds of English and Italian. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1965, p 59.

3. Agard and Di Pietro, p 59.

4. Agard and Di Pietro, p 2.

5. I would like to thank Mrs Michela Norris for her helpful comments.

8. Liaison interpreting problems specific to French

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The workshop session upon which this is based was preceded by a live demonstration of a liaison interpreting class. Thanks are due to my colleague, Mrs Joëlle Riley, and students Gillian Preston, Peter Geelan and Belangeni Ngindu for their willingness to take part in this.

The following remarks are based on about 10 years' experience of using liaison interpreting as a language teaching technique in the French section of the Department of Modern Languages at Salford University, and seek to describe its current use in the French curriculum. Over the years the chief problem has not been one inherent in French, or in its interaction with English, but rather a logistical one arising from the increasingly large numbers of students taking French as one of the two languages in their degree and for whom small-group interpreting classes have to be provided. I shall therefore include here a description of some of the strategies and rationalisations of workload which have enabled members of the French section to streamline their preparation and teaching while at the same time maintaining the value of the exercise to students.

It is well understood that many language departments have been deterred from introducing interpreting into their curriculum by the belief that it is essentially a small-group activity and therefore very costly in staff time. It is hoped that what follows will offer them some reassurance on this score while at the same time showing them some of the advantages, both linguistic and non-linguistic, of this language teaching method.

THE ROLE OF LIAISON INTERPRETING AT UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL

Interpreting classes begin in the third term of the third year, when the students return from their year's residence abroad. During that term they have one class per week in each of their two languages. These classes take place with up to six students and two members of staff, one taking the role of the French speaker and one the English speaker. In the fourth year there are two more terms of interpreting, and the number of classes rises to two per language per week, the extra two classes taking place in the language laboratory in groups of about twelve.

What do we hope the students will learn through liaison interpreting? Firstly it is <u>not</u> intended in any way as professional training.

(Nevertheless it has proved the case in the past that graduates of ours, many of whom go into jobs of various types in business and industry, have been called upon by their employers to act as 'ad hoc' interpreters for visitors, and they have reported that their previous grounding has given them the confidence and the techniques to perform perfectly adequately.) As a language teaching tool it provides a very useful means of activating the students' passive knowledge of French. In this respect it comes between the freedom of conversation classes, where the skilful student can steer the conversation to only those topics for which she knows the words, and the 'perfection' of translation classes, where students, having time and the resources of the dictionary on their side, are expected to produce a highly polished final version. In liaison interpreting the essence of the student's task is to extract the meaning from the original message, and then to convey the same meaning in the target language as quickly and as accurately as possible. In many cases this will entail considerable deviation from the original, and indeed, close adherence to the original would give an inferior rendering. Thus the students push themselves to analyse ideas and to summon up the vocabulary and structures necessary to express them. They derive a considerable sense of achievement when they carry this off successfully.

Another value of liaison interpreting is that it stretches students in their deployment of register. During their year abroad they have acquired an excellent command of colloquial French, especially the variety employed among students, but, even though most have worked in firms, they still seem less at ease in the more formal varieties. Interpreting classes provide the opportunity to practise these by establishing formal relationships, both between the two speakers and between the interpreters and the speakers.

PROGRESSION OF THE COURSE OVER THE THREE TERMS

The course is structured so that the dialogues increase in length, complexity of structures and ideas, and in the degree of technicality. We start with very short, straightforward contributions of not more than two or three sentences, and for the first three weeks deal only with the subjects with which the students will be very familiar and for which they will already have the vocabulary. We then move on to current affairs, informing the students of the topic in advance so that they can prepare themselves and the necessary vocabulary. The prime objective at this stage is to build up the students' confidence, to show them that they <u>can</u> do it, and that it can be enjoyable! It is also important to make them aware that they are not doing oral translation and that they have a 'customer' who depends on them.

In the second and third terms interventions lengthen to up to five

minutes. However, the number and complexity of ideas is more important than length. The students learn to sort out the principal message from its illustrations, the first statement of an idea from its several reformulated repetitions. They learn to pick out the attitude of the two speakers and to convey it faithfully and accurately. In the third term especially they are expected not only to convey attitudes and the message accurately, but if necessary to convey it even more clearly than the original speaker - as perhaps he would have done himself if he had had a second chance to express his meaning. By this stage also the students are expected to deal accurately with dates, figures and statistics, all of which seem to cause language students inordinate difficulty.

As the course progresses we deal with increasingly complex, and sometimes technical topics. The students may be warned in advance, or we spend a few minutes at the beginning of the class checking through the vocabulary that is likely to come up. We frequently deal with politics and current affairs, scientific and medical topics, and technology too. For example, we have 'visited' a dairy, with the students having to interpret detailed descriptions of the processing plant.

PREPARING MATERIAL FOR LIAISON INTERPRETING CLASSES

As stated at the beginning, the French section at Salford University has developed various strategies to streamline its interpreting teaching. One of these is to share out the responsibility for preparing material among the various teams who teach on the course, so that in any one week two teams will be responsible for the dialogue to be used in classroom sessions and for the one to be used in the language laboratory. Thus each team will be responsible for preparing material perhaps twice per term.

Preparing a 'script' means choosing a subject and making a dialogue out of it - past experience has shown that any subject can lend itself and in fact the most unlikely topics often prove the most successful. What is essential though is to ensure a true dialogue: for this the two participants must have roles to play, each with his own standpoint. An easy standpoint to adopt is the French point of view versus the English point of view, though this must not be overdone. Another possibility is the expert versus the layman, while another is the journalistic interview. Examples of other situations which have proved successful are an interview for a job, opening a bank account, and the attempt by Honest Joe, the second- hand car dealer, to sell one of his bargains to a poor, innocent Frenchman. Whenever there are visitors to the Department they find themselves invited to an interpreting session and often these can provide the most realistic sessions of all.

When a script is prepared it does not have to be written out in full. It is best to jot down the general direction and structure of a dialogue and supply any information the two participants may need to play their roles. Dialogues which have been written out in full and then read are much harder for the student to interpret than spontaneous speech.

INTERPRETING IN THE CLASSROOM

The staff team receives its material well in advance of the class so that it has time to assimilate it and modify it if necessary. Whatever form the script may take it is essential for the conversation to appear spontaneous. Students take turns to interpret and normally do so about once in each direction during the course of the class. They always use the first person in their interpretation.

Correcting the students takes place in one of two ways: either the students are corrected individually after each piece of interpreting or the members of staff save up all their remarks until the end of the class. The two strategies each have their disadvantages: it can be difficult to sustain the role-playing fiction if the conversation is constantly being interrupted by corrections and too many corrections can in any case prove counterproductive for students who already feel inhibited about their performance. It can be said though that leaving all the corrections to the end, on the other hand, can make them too divorced from the original errors.

The question of student note-taking is somewhat vexed. Ideally, as they are practising liaison and not consecutive interpreting, we do not expect the students to take notes other than figures, dates, names and a few key words. From the very beginning students are encouraged to have confidence in themselves and to rely on their memories rather than on notes. However, as exchanges get longer students do resort to the note-pad, very often for the reassurance it gives them. Experience shows though that the best performers are those who listen carefully, rely on their memory and make judicious use of notes.

INTERPRETING IN THE LANGUAGE LABORATORY

This is a recent introduction, partly to rationalise the teaching of interpreting, but also based on pedagogical considerations. Formerly all sessions took place in the classroom but now each student has one French class per week in the laboratory. This has permitted a reduction in staff contact hours as students can work in larger groups. It also has advantages for the students as they are able to have a go at interpreting all the interventions, rather than just

two or three. Since the cassettes they work on have inserted gaps they are able to record themselves and monitor their own performance. This can prove more salutary than a catalogue of their mistakes during the classroom hour.

ASSESSMENT

The students are assessed partly on their performance in class and partly by examinations taken at the end of the three-term course. At this stage they are assessed on four aspects of their performance. Their French, which while not expected to be of native speaker standard, must nevertheless be clear and accurate enough for the message to be fully understood without difficulty. The content of their interpretation, which must reflect accurately the message of the original speaker and his attitude when expressing it. The time taken should be at most the same as that of the original speaker, and ideally less, perhaps two-thirds the original. Finally their presentation should be convincing, they should always address themselves to the person for whom they are interpreting and speak spontaneously, rather than from notes.

Perhaps the above description may provide some suggestions for those about to embark upon the teaching of liaison interpreting. While admittedly a larger number of contact hours may be necessary than for other teaching methods, it should nevertheless be borne in mind that teaching material can be produced economically on a group basis, and that liaison interpreting does not entail any marking. On the other hand, the liaison interpreting class has the advantage of the tutorial in that it permits close and regular staff-student contacts and thus can serve a pastoral function. Finally, the idea I should like to leave you with is that, for the students and staff alike, interpreting is fun!

9. Interpreting isn't everything: other inter-language skills

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Working from the premiss that one of the essential characteristics of interpreting is its inter-linguisticity, it is the intention of the present paper, firstly, to place the activities of interpreting within an overall input-output scheme of language skills and activities which can form part of a teaching/learning strategy, and, secondly, to consider other language skills and activities which are akin to interpreting and are equally deserving of consideration when one comes to planning programmes for advanced learners or students of a foreign language. It will be my contention that these 'other' skills and activities are not only of advantage for furthering students' abilities both in the foreign and in their native language, but also possess a certain vocational relevance.

Given the composition of the audience to which these remarks are being addressed, and given that an attempt is being made to sketch an overall 'grand design' for language teaching programmes, much of what is being said will be familiar and obvious. In the interest of completeness, however, it does need to be stated.

1. The first assumption is that foreign language teaching does not represent a natural communication situation. Students require some form of external input or stimulus to generate an output or response: the language they produce in class does not normally result from their own perceived immediate communicative or expressive needs.

It should perhaps be added, however, that this assumption does not necessarily obtain in those situations in which the foreign language is being used as a medium of instruction and is thus being learnt or practised indirectly.

2. The input or stimulus to the student can be either linguistic or non-linguistic, although in the case of an input which is principally non-linguistic there will probably be some language element present. If it is linguistic it will involve either the spoken or the written MEDIUM or CHANNEL.

A language input will probably be one of three kinds: it can be text, which may or may not be complete, on which the student is required to perform certain operations (examples of the type of exercise referred to here will be given shortly); or it can be text which gives rise to further (additional or different) text; or it

can be the straightforward statement of a task without any additional text or other form of representation being attached to it.

A non-linguistic input involves a physical DIMENSION, normally either the acoustic or the visual, and will usually be designed to evoke some kind of descriptive response on the part of the student - though more of this later. Except in the case of direct physical force being applied to the learner - a case rarely planned for in language-teaching situations - this input will be accompanied by some text in the form of a command or instruction.

Given that the object of the exercise is for the students to increase their proficiency in the foreign language, one would normally expect the student output to be in the form of text, although other types of representation or other forms of behaviour can also be envisaged, especially if the particular activity being engaged in is one designed to practise or improve aural or reading comprehension.

Whatever form the output takes, however, it will require the student to process the input in some way, and one can analyse the processes involved and the changes effected on the original input.

4. Within this somewhat abstract framework for describing teaching/learning activities, an attempt will now be made to illustrate the types of technique referred to. For the time being it will generally be assumed that both teacher input and student output are in the foreign language (i.e. there is no element of inter-linguisticity involved), with the possible exception of those cases in which some instructions are given in the native language.

Type 1:
The input is text, which may or may not be complete, on which students perform certain operations. Examples of this type are completion exercises and transformation exercises. This type of activity can also involve a change of MEDIUM or channel, for instance from the spoken to the written, as in the case of dictations or the converse, reading aloud. In addition, there can be a significant change in VOLUME between the input and the output text, as occurs with summary or précis writing.

Type 2:
The output is text which leads to further text. Here one could be talking about model texts for students to copy, reproduce or imitate, or comprehension-type exercises in which students are required to answer questions on a text - and here again it is possible to have a change of medium, as in the case of written answers on a spoken text. A change of volume could also be envisaged here, for example if students are required to expand a pre-set framework.

Type 3:
The input is the statement of a task. This is the most open-ended of the types so far considered and can, for example, cover the setting of an essay or composition (in the written mode) or the description of communicative tasks to be performed within a given situation (in either the written or the spoken mode).

Type 4:
The principal input is non-linguistic, although it will probably be accompanied by some language text, usually of type 3. The input will probably be in the visual or acoustic dimension, although one could envisage games which make use of learners' tactile or olefactory faculties. Basically, the student output will be denotative or descriptive, e.g. naming objects heard or seen, describing visual representation of scenes or situations, describing scenes or events on the basis of sound effects, or 'translating' graphical or statistical information (e.g. tables) into coherent linguistic text. This type of exercise can, however, also be used, for instance, to teach students to give instructions or directions, perhaps on the basis of a street map.

So far, the types of activity have been approached from the input side. For the next category, it is necessary to approach from the output side.

Type 5:
The student output is in a form other than language text. Activities of this kind could require students to demonstrate their ability to follow instructions; here, for example, use could be made of the converse of the street-map situation referred to under type 4. Indeed, there is some scope here for pair, group or team activities which can set up lateral networks within a class.

Although an attempt has been undertaken here to categorise four discrete types of activity, the discreteness is simply for the purposes of analysis; in practice it is quite likely that mixed types will occur, for example students could be shown a short video with a commentary or other sound-track, and then on a second showing with the sound turned down be required to reproduce the accompanying text.

5. The preceding remarks have included a number of terms which will be used in setting up the matrix within which interpreting and the other language activities under consideration will be placed. The terms used so far have been DIMENSION, MEDIUM, VOLUME; to these must be added MODE, which will then be joined by the concept of SYSTEM. It is hoped that the use of these terms will not be regarded as too Humpty-Dumptyish; they are defined as follows:

MODE is the state of reception or production in which the students find themselves; the input side is obviously linked to the receptive

mode and the output side to the productive mode; it might also be useful to postulate a processing mode as the students switch from reception to production.

MEDIUM (or COMMUNICATION MEDIUM) is defined as the manifestation or channel of transmission of an underlying SYSTEM. In the case of language systems the medium will normally be spoken or written.

DIMENSION, to which the medium is linked, is the physical environment in which reception and production take place; the two basic dimensions used here are space and time; typically the written medium operates in the space dimension and the spoken medium in the time dimension.

Finally, VOLUME is defined as the amount or quantity of input or output; it can be taken either as length of text or amount of information transmitted.

The language activities under consideration as described here involve a number of switches between input and output; firstly, and obviously, there is always a switch of mode from the receptive to the productive, e.g. between reading and writing or listening and speaking; secondly, there can be a change of medium from spoken to written or vice versa, e.g. between reading and speaking or listening and writing. A change of medium will involve a change of dimension. Thirdly, there can be a change of volume, which may or may not be planned and/or significant (it would, for example, be planned and significant in the case of summarising; a change in volume may be unplanned but significant when it comes to judging the adequacy of a student response). Fourthly and finally, there can be a SYSTEM change which will be dealt with in the next section.

6. The type of system change so far postulated has been one between language and non-language in either direction. The term system as applied to language, however, can be used in two different ways; it can be taken to refer either to language as a system or to the system of a particular language. In this second sense a system- switch is an INTER-LANGUAGE switch (the term inter-language is used here in the full knowledge that it does also have a different meaning in the context of language teaching, but see the reference to Humpty-Dumpty above). This introduction of the concept of inter-linguisticity now opens up a new range of activities within the matrix, and ones which are peculiar to the foreign language learning context: the activities and techniques dealt with up to this point, although widely employed in foreign language teaching, are not exclusive to it, but can equally well be and indeed are used in native language teaching and teaching in the native language.

7. The inter-language factor is an important one in the education of a linguist if one accepts that one of the functions of foreign

language teaching is not just to enable the linguistically competent to gain a foothold in a different culture but also to equip them to act as mediators between the foreign culture and their own.

The linguistic mediating activities covered here can best be subsumed under the blanket headings of TRANSLATION and INTERPRETING. Within the terms of the system being put forward, they can be described as effecting an inter-language switch between input and output; there is also obviously a switch in mode, but the other parameters of dimension, medium, and volume remain unchanged.

8. Although within translation and interpreting the dimension parameter remains unchanged - i.e. translation, working with the visual medium, uses the space dimension, and interpreting, working with the acoustic medium, uses the time dimension - the structuring or progression of the dimension assumes critical importance for interpreting, and can be used to distinguish the different types of interpreting.

Both consecutive and simultaneous interpreting clearly have a delay between input and output, but the nature of the delay and the way in which the interpreter deals with it vary. In the case of simultaneous interpreting, input and output are being produced at the same time, but the information flow is staggered, and the problem for the interpreter is to receive, process and produce at the same time, keeping the output information far enough behind the input to be able to structure the argument, but close enough not to lose contact. In the case of consecutive interpreting, input and output are articulated in succession; processing is proceeding simultaneously with the input, and the problem for the interpreter is to retain the information for long enough to be able to recall it when required.

Thus a new element must be taken into the matrix; the temporal relationship between input and output, which will be referred to as TIME-LAG. Time-lag can be relevant in two possible ways; firstly, as a straight binary choice - for dictation or interpreting, for example, it is significant, for translation it is not (translation deadlines notwithstanding!); secondly, in the degree of delay; and thirdly, in the simultaneity or non-simultaneity of input and output.

9. A stage has now been reached when the overall matrix can be presented.

INPUT (I)	PROCESSES	OUTPUT (R)
DIMENSION		DIMENSION
1SYSTEM		1SYSTEM
if 1SYSTEM = language	CHANGE Y/N	
then 2SYSTEM		2SYSTEM
MEDIUM		MEDIUM
VOLUME	$>$, $<$	VOLUME
TIME	$=$, $\neq$	TIME

To recap on the definitions, and to introduce necessary new ones:

DIMENSION refers to the physical environment of time or space.

1SYSTEM is to be understood semiotically, as the sign-system involved,

2SYSTEM is the system of a particular language (Russian, Spanish, English etc),

MEDIUM, which is linked to DIMENSION, applies here only to a 2SYSTEM, and is typically either spoken or written.

VOLUME refers to the amount of text or the quantity of information transmitted; in the definition of activities its statement, and that of all the other elements, refers to the ideal, and not to any potentially deficient execution of a task. With the statement of volume, a simple Y/N is insufficient; the statement will have to be in the form of '<' or '>'.

The PROCESSES listed in the centre column concern the changes effected from input to output in the switch from the receptive to the productive mode. Essentially, there is a straightforward binary choice on each line, e.g. either the channel changes or it does not, either there is a change in volume or there is not, so the change or absence of it could simply be expressed in the form 'equals' or 'does not equal'. This does not, however, work with the element TIME; obviously input-time and output-time will never be identical, so $TIME_I = TIME_R$ will be taken as meaning that input and output are being produced simultaneously, albeit with a time-lag; $TIME_I \neq TIME_R$ will be taken to mean consecutive input and output,

with minimum delay before onset of output. In cases where the delay between input and output is irrelevant, no TIME statement will be made.

We can now proceed to apply the descriptive framework proposed to a number of language activities, or language-learning activities, to see what they involve. First consider those where only the dimension and channel change:

DICTATION: $D_1 \neq D_R$, $1S_1 = 1S_R$, $2S_1 = 2S_R$, $C_1 \neq C_R$, $V_1 = V_R$, $T_1 = T_R$

READING ALOUD: $D_1 \neq D_R$, $1S_1 = 1S_R$, $2S_1 = 2S_R$, $C_1 \neq C_R$, $V_1 = V_R$, $T_1 = T_R$

These two examples immediately show ways in which the manner of statement can be improved; firstly, the statement contains an excessive degree of redundancy, so it is only necessary to give a full account of those elements where a change occurs, otherwise a simple specification is all that is required; and secondly, given that here two different activities are, at this level, given the same definition, further specification is necessary of the direction or nature of the change; thus for dictation the D change is from time to space (t --> s), and concomitantly the C change is from spoken to written (o --> w), whereas for reading aloud the changes are reversed.

Thus a simpler statement would be : DICTATION: D (t --> s), C (o --> w) / 1S (1), 2S (1_2) READING ALOUD: D (s --> t), C (w --> o) /1S (1), 2S (1_2),

However, when setting up the conditions it was stated that the absence of a T statement would mean that the time-lag was irrelevant: that is patently not the case here, so we shall have to add $T_1 = T_R$.

Consider next the case of a written description of a picture; here there is a change in the 1SYSTEM, so the statement is 1S (p[ictorial] --> l[inguistic]); the other parameters either remain the same or changes are irrelevant, so the conditions are / D (v), 2S (1_2).

If, however, the task set is to give a running commentary on an action (either filmed or live), the T element assumes importance, so the statement reads; 1S (p --> l), $T_1 = T_R$. The statement of the conditions would have to include D (t), 2S (1_2) and C(s).

In the case of a written précis, the statement would be simply V (i > r) / 1S (1), 2S (1_2), C (w).

Turning now to the areas which more directly concern us, the statement for TRANSLATION would be 2S (1_1 --> 1_2 or vice versa), with the condition / C (w). The statement for simultaneous interpreting would be 2S (1_2 --> 1_1), $T_1 = T_R$ / C (o), whereas for liaison interpreting it would most likely be: 2S (1_1 <--> 1_2), $T_1 \neq T_R$ /C(o).

10. Having set up the system, it should be made clear that it is no being presented as an overall scheme which will cover any language activity; universality is not the purpose of this particular approach. For example, without a great deal of information on internal textual organisation the scheme gives no meaningful information on the processes involved either in transformation exercises (e.g. active --> passive, or direct speech --> indirect speech) or even in comprehension exercises where no change of medium is involved, and there is certainly no desire to push the conventionality of the scheme so far that a convention is established where 'no change = comprehension exercise'.

Neither is it being claimed that the complexity or otherwise of a particular statement is any indication of the complexity or difficulty of the task, or that it is in any way a reflection of the psychological processes involved.

11. For the purposes of this paper, attention will be concentrated on those cases in which there is a change of 2SYSTEM, i.e. a change from one language to another. Activities involving 2SYSTEM changes discussed so far have had this as the only parameter changed; DIMENSION, CHANNEL, MEDIUM and VOLUME have remained essentially unaltered in the cases of translation and interpreting, although in the latter case the TIME-LAG has also assumed importance.

It is now intended to consider cases of 2SYSTEM change which are accompanied by changes in other parameters, particularly MEDIUM (and therefore also DIMENSION) and VOLUME; we shall also discuss cases apart from interpreting in which the TIME-LAG is significant.

For the most part it will be assumed that the 2SYSTEM change is unidirectional, i.e. that the mediator is not being required to switch from one language into another and then back again (as is the case with liaison interpreting).

The parameter change that apparently causes least difficulty is that of VOLUME; the change will presumably be one whereby $V_1 > V_R$, i.e. the activity concerns summary or précis. It is suggested that inter-language summary-writing is a reasonably common exercise in advanced language skills training, but that inter-language oral summarising is a less common activity - this perhaps reflecting a tendency to have somewhat less structured oral activities at an advanced level.

Of the 'traditional' advanced oral skills, oral summary is probably closest to consecutive interpreting; using the present scheme they would both have the same definition with the exception of the volume element V, i.e. both involve a 2SYSTEM switch in the spoken mode/time dimension, and for both there is presumably the need for the output to follow without undue delay.

In some ways, however, oral summary places greater demands on the linguist; the amount of text to be produced may be less, but it may be necessary to process larger chunks than is the case with interpreting, this then placing greater demands on memory and possibly note-taking ability, and in particular the linguist is required to filter the input, abstracting its essential features for reproduction; thus the linguist has to select from and also to restructure the input text.

Given this basic pattern of a 2SYSTEM change with oral input/output and a reduction of volume between input and output, it is now possible to try varying other parameters, or rather one other parameter, namely MEDIUM, and thus also DIMENSION, and to consider an aural/ written and a written/oral shift. Taking the second first, although more parameter changes are involved, the task - of producing an oral summary in one language of a written text produced in the other - is probably simpler than that of the oral précis of a spoken text. There are various reasons for this, but as the student has the text available and can thus scan backwards and forwards, the demands on memory are not so great; also, for the same reasons, the structure of the text is more apparent and, as long as the student is allowed to mark the text, demands on note-taking ability will be minimal. The possible difficulty, if the student is allowed to retain the text throughout the operation, is that she may get too hung up on actual formulations in the original and not be able to maintain the necessary distance. (The student is referred to as 'she' as most students of modern languages are female.)

If producing an oral summary of a written text is probably a simpler task than producing an oral summary of an oral text, the production of a written summary of a spoken text is potentially far more difficult. Not only does it contain all the problems of the oral summary (with the possible exception of the time-lag factor), but it places greater demands on the structuring and linguistic accuracy of the output - fudging is not so easy, and the reader is able to go over the text more than once.

Having now introduced the DIMENSION/MEDIUM switch into the discussion, let us consider possible cases of 2SYSTEM and MEDIUM switch without a reduction in VOLUME. Theoretically there are two possibilities; producing a full written version in one language of a spoken text produced in another, and producing a full oral version in one language of a text written in another. The first case, which involves an aggregation of dictation and simultaneous interpreting, is so difficult, if not impossible, that it can be rejected immediately (unless one is talking about the oral input being available on tape for multiple play-throughs, but then the activity is essentially one of transcription followed by translation). The second case, however, which could be glossed as 'on-sight oral translation', is deserving of consideration - indeed, in some translation classes one

feels that students have already acquired some proficiency in it. Apart from training students in channel-switching, it is also a way of improving speed of response and fluency.

12. The activities presented as part of a possible advanced oral/aural skills package entailing elements of interlinguisticity require the application of highly complex skills, and as such include various sub-skills such as note-taking, fluency, memory training and comprehension, and one could imagine a certain amount of cross-fertilisation taking place. At the same time, these various activities should not be regarded as necessarily being discrete, and definitely not in any way mutually exclusive. It is, for example, possible to plan small-group activities involving a number of different advanced skills, for example interpreting from language A into language B followed by an oral or written summary in language A of the language B interpreter's output, perhaps with the student who read the original text A then evaluating both the interpreting and the summary.

13. There are two final points to be made: one of them concerns the applicability or possible vocational relevance of the activities which have been sketched out here, and the other concerns the status and role of these activities within an overall advanced language teaching programme.

To take the first point: there is a certain body of opinion holding that interpreting and translating are the only, or at least the principal, inter-language activities going on in the real world. This is only true to the extent that these are activities in which certain professional people - i.e. interpreters and translators - engage full-time, and that they are the only activities with a clear professional label attached to them, i.e. 'translator' or 'interpreter' is a recognised professional occupation, 'oral summariser' is not.

However, many more people than full-time professional interpreters and translators engage in inter-language activities, but for them these activities are only part of the equipment which they need for their duties. One example that springs immediately to mind is that of a newspaper's foreign affairs correspondent based abroad who will be processing material produced in the language of the host country for consumption by readers in the home country. Another instance would be that of a foreign service diplomat who will be relaying intelligence for consideration by the government at home. And one could think of manifold cases in business where executives with a reporting function will be required to cross a language divide to discharge their duties satisfactorily.

Given that journalism, the foreign diplomatic service and export and multinational industries are areas in which one might expect to find

graduates with degrees in modern languages or with joint degrees with a language element, there would appear to be a vocational argument, if none other, for our engaging in oral/aural inter- language activities other than interpreting. Although the quantitative argument is not exclusively decisive, one suspects that more graduates who use languages in their professions will engage in summary/ reporting activities than engage in full-scale, full-time interpreting and translating, so some account should be taken of this.

14. The final aspect to be dealt with concerns the role and status of advanced inter-language skills within an overall teaching programme, and here two points need to be considered. The first relates to the position within the programme and the relationship between the complex skills and the various sub-skills involved, and the second to the more general question of the structuring of oral skills activities.

In those places where interpreting is practised, there appear to be two schools of thought about when it should be introduced; the one would reserve it until the final year, and definitely after the year abroad, whereas the other would have it introduced at a relatively early stage in the course. There are, of course, arguments for and against both approaches, and it is not the intention to enter into them here. If, however, interpreting and other inter-language activities are introduced at a later stage in the proceedings, due care then perhaps needs to be paid to preparatory training in the various sub-skills involved - for example note-taking in the foreign language, which is erroneously supposed to be something every student can do without being taught. And even if interpreting and allied skills are introduced at an earlier stage, so that proficiency can be built up synthetically rather than analytically, some thought needs to be given to additional support training in the sub-skills required.

The second point concerns the overall structuring of oral skills activities. Although written skills activities are always structured in some way - even if the structuring goes no further than having two classes entitled 'Translation' and 'Essay-Writing' - there often seems to be little attempt to structure oral skills activities; often it is deemed sufficient to set aside one hour a week for something known as 'conversation', which then more often then not is delegated to a foreign language assistant. This is not necessarily the most efficient procedure that one could envisage, and what the present paper has attempted to do is present an approach to defining language skills and activities, an approach including the mediating, inter-language activities in which it is felt our students should be trained, which might be of some help in planning and implementing more varied and clearly structured 'spoken language classes'.

Finally it is hoped that an indication has been given of how those who are interested in advanced language skills programmes and wish to include inter-language activities, both written and spoken, have more options open to them than the 'classic' activities of straight translation and straight interpreting, and that the 'mongrel' skills involved here are by no means the poor relations of the 'thoroughbreds', but instead provide a welcome infusion of new blood.

10. Interpreting and the communicative approach

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Interpreting is a relatively recent innovation in the university foreign language degree syllabus. The first undergraduate courses involving a significant amount of interpreting were established some twenty years ago, partly as an alternative to traditional literature -based courses, and partly with the intention of producing graduates having a very good practical command of the foreign language and some experience of its vocational use.

Since that time, however, syllabus design has developed significantly, with a move away from teaching methods based on grammar and translation towards methods based on communication, which are considered to be more effective in stimulating language acquisition.

Are we then to assume that interpreting, being a form of translation, is an ineffective language teaching technique? Or that, being a form of communication, it is an effective technique? The aim of the present paper is to consider whether interpreting offers an effective language learning environment, and to suggest how it might be made more effective. In order to do this, it is necessary to describe a typical interpreting lesson and to propose criteria against which the exercise can be judged.

THE TYPICAL INTERPRETING LESSON

A small-scale and very unscientific survey conducted by the author shows that, although most teachers who conduct interpreting lessons consider the main purpose to be language teaching, in reality the purpose of interpreter training largely determines the way in which the lesson is organised. In conducting the lesson, the teacher tends to rely on his or her experience of working as an interpreter, or on the advice of colleagues who have first-hand experience. The typical lesson therefore tends to be a modified version of conference interpreting.

The L1 speaker (usually the permanent teacher and person responsible for the lesson) agrees beforehand with the L2 speaker (often a temporary language assistant) on at least the subject to be discussed and the direction which the discussion will take. In most cases, though, the agreement takes the form of a detailed script, especially if some sort of equivalence between a number of interpreting groups is needed, or one of the speakers is unwilling to ad-lib. The lesson then takes the form of a series of planned contributions, very often consisting of a statement responding to the previous

contribution and a question designed to prompt the next contribution. The activity is not unlike tennis, with a regular serve and return, serve and return.

The length of each utterance between interpreting cycles is determined by the teacher. As each speaker speaks, the students (in groups of 5-10) take notes; at some point the teacher indicates that the time has come for the utterance to be translated and chooses a student to act as interpreter. The student renders the contribution in the TL, often in the form of a summary, working from notes. The speaker may then continue, or the turn may pass to the other speaker, and the procedure is repeated. The student's version is corrected by the teachers either immediately after it has been given, or at the end of the lesson. Corrections are often made in the student's L1, and generally relate to errors of grammar or factual information.

Details of the lesson vary from teacher to teacher: whether the students use first or third-person forms, how long the utterances are, whether the students are allowed to interrupt the speaker, when and how the students are corrected, whether the students are told beforehand whose turn it is, and so on. A feature of this type of lesson is that the teachers see vocabulary, note-taking and summarising as crucial to the exercise.

The interpreting lesson may seem to be a communicative exercise, since the two speakers are communicating with each other, and the student interpreter is communicating with both. But <u>is</u> this communication? And is this kind of work likely to help language learning? Is it even likely to produce trained interpreters? To answer these questions, let us first consider the conditions in which language learning is likely to be most effective.

CONDITIONS FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING

If simply exposure to the L2 and practice in its use are sufficient for language learning, then clearly the lesson will be helpful. Even judged against this criterion, however, the lesson is seen to have two shortcomings: limited exposure to authentic L2 (since the native L2 speaker is silent for a large part of the lesson) and limited opportunity for each student to use the L2.

For effective language learning, however, I believe that exposure to the L2 and practice in its use are in themselves not enough: the L2 to which the learner is exposed and which he/she is required to practise must represent a wide variety of meaningful authentic discourse appropriate to his or her needs. This is one of the principles on which the communicative approach to language teaching is based, and it has led teachers (especially in the EFL field) to devise a wide range of role-playing and simulation activities

designed to stimulate realistic language practice. Two other principles on which communicative language teaching is based are also appropriate to our evaluation of the interpreting lesson: 1 - learning is most effective when the L2 is presented to the learners as a means of communication, rather than a system of forms; 2 - learning is most effective when the L2 is presented, not as a system equivalent to the L1, but as an independent system functioning in its own characteristic way.

Before the effectiveness of the interpreting lesson as an exercise in communication can be assessed, it is necessary to indicate what is meant by a wide variety of meaningful language.

LANGUAGE VARIETY AND MEANING

The evolution of communicative teaching methods has been stimulated by, and so to some extent has stimulated, work on the classification and explanation of meaning at both sentence and discourse level. Discourse analysis and text typology help us to understand the range of rhetorical purposes and speech acts which the competent language user must be able to realise, and the linguistic forms which the realisations take. At discourse level, the work on classifying and exemplifying language functions and notions undertaken in connection with the Council of Europe's Modern Languages Project ('Threshold level') [1,2,] for example, provides a detailed basis for constructing a communicative language teaching syllabus. At a more concrete level, Halliday's (1973) theory of language function [3] provides an explanation of language meaning which is linked to linguistic forms and grammatical categories. As this explanation of language function is not as widely known as it deserves to be, and will be referred to again in this paper, a brief survey of the theory will be given below.

Halliday sees every utterance as embodying three kinds of meaning, and realising three different functions. The first function of language is to express the speaker's role as observer: his/her view of reality, of events and states. This function of language is to express what is generally considered to be meaning: concepts, information, ideas. This is the function of language which allows us to communicate, to give and receive information, to share our experience with others. This kind of meaning, ideational meaning, is expressed through transitivity (processes, agents, states), voice (the active/passive option which allows us to indicate or not indicate the agents involved in the process) and referential meaning.

At the same time as we express ideational meaning, however, we express our attitudes, both to the person we are speaking with, and to what we are saying. This function of language allows us to participate in discourse, to realise a role in society. This kind of meaning, interpersonal meaning, is expressed through mood (which

generally coincides with rhetorical purpose), modality (the speaker's commitment to what is said), the linguistic devices which are often thought of as style (the choice of formal versus informal lexis, expressive devices such as metaphor, simile, exclamations, etc), forms of address, stress and intonation.

The third kind of meaning is textual meaning, the language choices which enable us to construct coherent discourse, rather then disjointed utterances. This function of language is realised through elements of cohesion (pronouns, omission, ellipsis, etc), and through information focus in the sentence (drawing attention to new information and linking it with what has been said before by sentence structure, intonation, the active/passive choice, etc).

The value of this explanation of meaning is that it enables us to define what we mean when we say that learners should be exposed to a wide variety of language. Variety applies not simply to ideational meaning, but to combinations of all three kinds of meaning. The learner's task is to acquire the ability to construct appropriate combinations of all three kinds of meaning in the L2 for a wide range of situations, and one of the main dangers of a language teaching approach based on equivalence of forms between the L1 and L2 (the grammar/translation approach) is that it encourages the learner to express L2 meanings and adopt L2 participant roles by analogy with L1 models. One of the main contributions of communicative language teaching is its insistence on presenting and practising L2 meanings exclusively in L2 terms.

THE PLACE OF TRANSLATION IN THE SYLLABUS

If translation is unhelpful, even harmful, for language learning because it encourages the learner to believe that meanings are expressed in the L2 in the same way as in the L1, so that if he learns equivalent syntactic and morphological rules and acquires a suitable stock of vocabulary he can express any meanings in the L2 which he can express in the L1, does this mean that translation should be dropped from the undergraduate language course syllabus?

With a grammar/translation approach, the problem of non-equivalence of meanings is tackled through some element of the syllabus usually known as 'stylistics' or 'usage'. However, I believe that this does not make for effective language learning.

In a communicative syllabus, the L2 is presented from the very beginning as a meaningful system functioning independently of the L1. Style is not taught separately, because style (as Halliday says) is simply the overall combinations of meanings which the speaker chooses to express. Translation is not an appropriate activity in the early stages of learning, but it can be a useful exercise at a later stage, provided that it serves a semantic, rather than a

syntactic purpose. By 'syntactic' I mean the purpose which translation serves in a grammar-based approach, especially in the earlier stages: for checking that the student understands how the L2 models which are presented to him are equivalent to his L1 structures, and for prompting him to use the L2 to express L1 meanings. With communicative teaching, both the checking of comprehension and the prompting of L2 use are done either by non-verbal means, or in terms of the L2 itself.

In a communicative syllabus, translation can be seen as a valuable teaching technique, but preferably at an advanced stage, when the learner has sufficient L2 competence to be able to appreciate the complexity of the various kinds of meaning interwoven in each utterance, and preferably with the purpose of contrasting the ways in which meanings are expressed in the two languages.

INTERPRETING AS ORAL TRANSLATION

If interpreting is seen as oral translation, the same remarks must apply, except that the interpreting lesson should concentrate on contrasting the ways in which meanings are expressed in the spoken mode (rather than written) in the two languages. However, this is a very difficult task, since the interpreter is called upon to do in a very short time, with all the distractions and stress of the interpreting situation, what the translator does with time and facilities for analysis and reflection: to find TL meaning combinations which produce the same dynamic effect on the TL hearer as the SL text had on the SL hearer.[4] For this, the translator not only has to find equivalent combinations of the various kinds of meanings (in Halliday's terms), but must use his knowledge of the world and the given linguistic situation, and his knowledge of the two language systems, to adjust the meanings in the light of what he perceives as the speaker's rhetorical purpose. This is what Seleskovitch (1977) [5] refers to as 'discarding the linguistic meaning of the utterance and going for the non-verbal sense'. Oral translation, or simultaneous interpreting, obviously demands a very advanced L2 competence, and it is very doubtful if this kind of work can be considered an effective language teaching technique. My own opinion is that translation is best left to written mode, and that the interpreting lesson should not be considered as an oral translation lesson.

This opinion is reinforced by the belief (which appears to be shared by many interpreters and teachers of interpreting) that conference (and liaison) interpreting is not oral translation: it involves mediation, explanation and paraphrasing - in other words, what is generally meant by the word 'interpretation'. The task of the interpreter is not simply to find an equivalent combination of meanings in the SL, but to help the discourse to progress. If translation can be considered as a spectrum ranging from word-for-word translation through literal translation (what Newmark (1982) [6] calls

'semantic translation') to free translation (Newmark's 'communicative translation'), interpreting must be considered as a parallel but different spectrum ranging from literal translation through free translation to paraphrasing and explanation.

THE INTERPRETING LESSON AS A LANGUAGE TEACHING TECHNIQUE

With some understanding of the conditions for effective language learning and some idea of what is meant by 'meaning', 'translation' and 'interpreting', it is now possible to evaluate the interpreting lesson as a language learning environment.

Judged against the criteria proposed above for effective language learning, the typical interpreting lesson will be seen to have the following shortcomings.

1. Exposure to a wide variety of meaningful authentic L2.

The interpreting lesson may appear to expose the learner to a wide variety of L2, but in reality the range of language may be very restricted. If the speakers do not deliberately choose an appropriate range of speech acts to be presented, there is a danger that the only variety will be lexical, and that the speakers, while thinking that they are playing a variety of roles, will play the same role each time and simply vary the situation. The discourse may become restricted to the question-and-answer routine of a journalist's interview, or a discussion between professional people of the two countries. In Halliday's terms, the variety will be restricted to ideational meaning, and the same interpersonal meanings will be expressed in each lesson.

The danger of restriction is intensified by the fact that many teachers are not used to expressing a wide variety of interpersonal meanings in their academic work, and feel that role-playing should not be taken so far as expressing profound disagreement, or using very expressive language. If both speakers know both languages, there may be a danger that they will fail to use very expressive language and tend to present relatively formal academic language more typical of writing than of speaking because they appreciate the difficulties of translating very expressive language.

As regards authentic L2 input, the lesson is not necessarily valuable, because for much of the time devoted to the L2 it is the students, rather than the L2 speaker, who are speaking.

2. Extensive practice in L2 use for meaningful communication.

With five to ten students in the group, the lesson does not allow each individual student much time for L2 practice. In addition, requiring the students to summarise encourages them both to

concentrate on ideational meaning and to select only what are considered the most important aspects of ideational meaning. In a summary, factual information tends to take precedence over attitudinal meaning, as is confirmed by the kind of corrections often proposed by teachers in interpreting lessons.

At the same time, there is a danger that the students will not see the situation as one in which communication is taking place. They know that the speakers have agreed beforehand on a script, and that both know the other's language. The lesson can easily become a syntactic exercise, concentrating on forms of language, rather than on meanings, or a memorising and summarising exercise, rather than an attempt to involve the students in real discourse. This can be seen in the questions often asked by students: 'Was there a question at the beginning?'; 'What was the number in the middle?'; 'Could you repeat the bit after two million, please?' The organisation of the lesson can encourage this attitude: if it is the teacher who decides the length of the utterance, if the contributions are written as a script which is placed on the table in front of the speakers, if the students are corrected after each contribution, and if the corrections concern mainly errors of grammar and factual information, the students are unlikely to accept this as anything other than a problem-solving exercise.

A further factor which may discourage the learners from acting roles and expressing a variety of interpersonal meanings is the widespread belief that the interpreter is a conciliator, preferring not to express in the TL interpersonal meanings which might upset the hearer. The interpreter who fears to translate views which might be offensive is a stock figure of comedy, not far removed from the messenger who is killed for bringing bad news.

For these reasons, the typical interpreting lesson is of doubtful value in the language teaching syllabus. In particular, if the learners are required to summarise in concise L2 what was said in more expressive form in the L1, the teacher is doing the exact opposite to what is needed for effective language learning: the learners should be working from concise prompts to linguistic forms, not vice versa.

HOW CAN THE INTERPRETING LESSON BE MADE MORE COMMUNICATIVE?

An ideal syllabus would incorporate a range of activities designed to expose the learners to a wide variety of authentic and meaningful L2 and to require them to produce meaningful and increasingly accurate L2 for the purposes of communication. A wide range of communicative activities suitable for learners at all levels is described in the specialist literature, especially in the field of English as a foreign language, and many of these are appropriate for the university foreign language syllabus. This does not mean, however,

that I would advocate discarding interpreting in favour of a timetable activity entitled 'communication games'. The real syllabus must take account of reality: timetable limitations, student expectations, staff capabilities, and so on. I would therefore advocate organising the interpreting lesson in a different way in order to provide better conditions for language learning.

The typical lesson described above could be improved as follows:

a/ by selecting an appropriate range of speech acts and ensuring that these are regularly presented and practised;

b/ by leaving correction until the end of the lesson, so as to preserve the illusion of a real-life situation and avoid constraining the students from using the L2;

c/ by correcting meanings (and expecially attitudes), rather than grammatical forms, numbers, quantities, names, etc;

d/ by presenting authentic spoken language, with all the features which distinguish it from written language;

e/ by inviting guest speakers to participate in the activity in order to give some variety of meanings, accents and pronunciations, and by organising multilingual interpreting activities (for example mock conferences);

f/ by allowing the learners to determine the length of the utterance to be translated, discouraging them from note-taking and summarising, and encouraging them to see the language as discourse, embodying meanings and intentions, rather than sentences embodying syntactic problems;

g/ by requiring the students to act as speakers, in place of the teachers.

However, these changes would still leave a lesson which is more of an interpreter training exercise than a language teaching exercise. For language learning, the activity could be made more effective if a radical change in approach were adopted: accept that language learning is the prime purpose, and organise the interpreting lesson as a true role-playing exercise, with the learners, and not simply the teachers, playing roles. The aim would be to ensure that the learners work, not from linguistic forms to summarised meanings, but from summarised meanings - prompts - to linguistic forms.

In practice, this could be organised as follows. The students are seen as interpreters having allegiance to a delegation, headed by the L1 teacher, and take turns in acting as the delegation's spokesman. The teacher outlines to the spokesman the general meanings and

attitudes to be conveyed to the L2 speaker, and it is up to the spokesman to express these meanings in appropriate form in the L2. The student is required to interpret the L2 contribution for his delegation head as though this were a real situation: either by translating, or by summarising, or by explaining. The two teachers agree before the lesson on a general situation, the attitudes to be taken and the direction the discourse will take, but do not decide on precise wording. The students are told of the situation beforehand, so that they can acquire appropriate lexis before the lesson if they wish.

With this approach, the teachers, and the learners, act as realistically as possible. No corrections are made during the lesson; any factual mistake is accepted at face value, and L2 grammatical mistakes are accepted by the L2 speaker as natural, provided that the contribution is generally comprehensible. The students' attention can be drawn to serious errors, and especially errors of attitude, at the end of the lesson, or in conversation classes with the L2 speaker.

In this way, the interpreting lesson is made more meaningful, less grammar-based, more demanding but more rewarding for the learners. Many of the questions of technique which worry teachers of interpreting resolve themselves: the learners themselves determine the length of the contributions; first-person forms are naturally used; correction during the exercise is inappropriate; student performance is evaluated as much on the basis of communicative competence as on the ability to function as an interpreter or the ability to translate.

This type of interpreting lesson permits a wide range of variation: as the students' competence improves, they could be divided into L1 and L2 delegations, and realistic group discussions (in the L1 and the L2) about each delegation's tactics and attitudes could be encouraged. The students could then take turns in acting as L2 spokesman. In this way, the teachers could gradually withdraw from direct control of the linguistic situation, leaving the intensive language practice to the students. Preparation for the exercise and discussion of the students' performance could be done in the L2 in a separate lesson with the L2 speaker, in order to increase the exposure to authentic L2, and to provide variety in the 'conversation class'.

Although the main aim is to advance the students' communicative competence, rather than interpreter training, the exercise may actually be closer to the kind of interpreting work which the graduate will be called upon to perform than the conference mode of the typical interpreting lesson. It is not unreasonable to call this type of part-interpreting, part-mediating, part-initiating language work 'liaison interpreting'.

In this way a communicative language teaching technique could be seen to facilitate language acquisition, without being totally divorced from the vocational training which the students, and prospective employers, might expect.

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11. Methodology or technology? Striking a balance in advanced language teaching

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At a previous conference, barely a year ago[1], the place of oral and aural skills in the modern languages degree was extensively debated, and particular attention was paid to interpreting as a language-learning activity. The present conference takes that debate a stage further, and the question now for a growing number of academics is not whether but how to teach interpreting to undergraduates, and with what methodologies and what resources.

An appropriate starting-point for tackling such questions could be found in the list of potentially teachable language skills proposed by Professor Sam Taylor in his contribution to the Bradford conference. In the second section of his paper ' Communicative skills and the modern languages degree'[2] he identified four categories of needs for the modern languages graduate today and expressed them as possible elements of a syllabus: the skills of reception, production, analysis and social interaction. A needs-based syllabus designed to promote the acquisition of these skills would be the next essential step. Armed with such a document, one could identify specific lesson objectives at various levels and determine how best to meet them; that is, decide what teaching strategies and techniques to employ and what human and technical resources to deploy in order to enhance, facilitate or render more efficient the teaching and learning.

Such a wide-ranging review of the aims and the means of teaching interpreting could well be complemented by a look at the interaction - both actual and potential - between interpreting and the other elements of the languages syllabus, and while taking such a fresh look at other parts of the languages curriculum, we could well look outside our domain of modern languages to consider the ways in which higher education as a whole is not only becoming more open to transdisciplinary experiments but is also recognising at last the irresistible pressure of the information revolution, a pressure which must inevitably lead to our envisaging new structures, new institutions, new ways of disseminating information and communicating with students. Like the teaching of politics, ethnology, biology or anything else, the teaching of interpreting as a part of the languages curriculum needs and deserves discussion at the practical level. But we would also do well, at this early stage in its development, not to lose sight of the broader context. While the methodology and technology of teaching interpreting are evolving rapidly, they must

be seen against the background of a pedagogical revolution: the challenge presented not just to the tertiary sector but to the whole of education by the almost limitless potential which information technology offers for more, more varied and faster communication between teacher and pupil.

Tempting though such a broad canvas might be, the primary concern here is to discuss resources for the teaching of interpreting to undergradutes. So perhaps we could begin by extracting from an actual syllabus just three sections, each covering a few weeks of the course; we could then look at some possible approaches to the practical teaching of the activities involved, and finally consider some of the material resources available for the support of such teaching today and in the very near future.

INTRODUCTION TO INTERPRETING, YEAR II

The first sample (Table 1) outlines briefly the content and lesson treatment during the first fourteen weeks of an interpreting course followed by undergraduates at Bradford University. (All students start interpreting in Week 1 of Year II; in Week 14 - the following February - they go abroad on placement for a year.) The technical resources suggested for this introductory phase - and indeed the minimum facilities needed for the whole course - are all introduced by Week 3. These resources are commonly available in almost all language departments, and include the language laboratory (LL), overhead projector (OHP), and - optionally - audio self-study facilities and video replay. (Certain more advanced activities in Years III and IV could benefit from other facilities where these can be made available, e.g. video as a LL source, and a conference laboratory. These basic facilities and 'optional extras' will be discussed later.)

TABLE 1: Year II, Weeks 1-14 (2 hours per week)

Class 1

Group sits in horseshoe arrangement in seminar room or at front of language laboratory (LL).
1. Introductory talk. Tutor links interpreting with Year I aural comprehension work and impending year abroad. Looking further ahead, outlines specific and general objectives: Year IV final examinations in simultaneous and consecutive interpreting; increased confidence and language competence. Plays part of typical exam tape over loudspeaker, then shows part of transcript on OHP: very brief discussion of textual features

and difficulties. If available, actual examples of simultaneous and consecutive interpreting on video. General discussion of problems, skills involved (build up list on OHP from students' suggestions) and strategies for acquiring them.
2. Group exercise (groupex), students in horseshoe round tutor. Working in pairs, task is to interpret short sentences (quickies) from memory only to partner (E-FL or FL-E, as they come); tutor speaks sentence, then designates which student of the pair ('A or B', 'left or right' partner) is to interpret; all designated interpreters work at the same time (they need to learn to focus attention and filter out distractions); brief criticisms ('Any very good versions? How did your partner tackle it?'); possible solution, then on to next item. Same treatment for 10-20 items. General comments on performances: strengths and weaknesses.

Class 2

1. Groupex, further series of relatively easy 'quickies', some recalling items (or close variants) from previous class, still memory only. 15-30 minutes.
2. LL exercise (Labex). Similar content, but tutor speaks items from console microphone to booths. All students interpret all items, then rewind and review own work (with tutor monitoring attentively) and re-record any less-than-perfect items. General discussion (LL in 'group conference' or free conversation with headsets off) of difficulties and good solutions.

Classes 3 to 7

Similar format, but:
1. In groupexes, mixture of solo performances and pairs work.
2. In labexes, items increase gradually in length or difficulty. Occasional discussion of memory span, overload problems, etc.
3. Tasks (between classes): listen to daily news broadcasts, complete designated exercise tapes in audio-workroom.

Class 8

1. Groupex, 5-15 minutes, pairs and solo, memory only.
2. Discuss note-taking. Groupex in pairs, items longer than previously, but interpreted with notes. Pairs criticism and comparison of notes with partner.
3. Groupex: longer items but solo performance. Discussion of soloists' and others' notes, illustrated on OHP, followed by tutor's notes on OHP.
4. Tasks: designated exercises in audio-workroom, daily news tapes, radio.

Class 9

1. Groupex: 2 longer items with notes and OHP illustration. Discussion with OHP: illustration of keywording, layout, abbreviation, symbolisation. Starter kit of essential concepts on OHP.
2. Labex: further longer items with notes.
3. Tasks: as before.

Classes 10 to 14

1. Groupex: similar format, some with notes, some without. Occasional review of notes on OHP or by comparison with neighbour.
2. Labex: two-language dialogue (live voice; recorded tape; mixed live voice and tape). All students work individually in booths; own criticism and occasional reworking of all or some exercises with selective criticism from tutor at console. Class ends with group discussion of difficulties and solutions, either in 'group conference' mode or in group around console, with OHP for notation, or revision and occasional loudspeaker version of a (good) student's track.
3. Tasks as before.

YEAR III

Upon the return of students from abroad in Week 15 of Year III, the immediate task is to reintroduce interpreting, revise note-taking and, capitalising on their high level of fluency, build up to longer and more demanding two-way consecutive exercises. Later, in Term 3. simultaneous can be introduced.)

TABLE 2 Year III, Weeks 15-16, (2 hours per Week)

Week 15

Students in group. Review of objectives. Sample of finals examination on loudspeaker. Discussion of typical contents and difficulty level. Groupex: short current affairs news items (voice or recordings on loudspeaker); discuss notation and memory problems in group. Tasks: designated follow-up exercises.

Week 16

1. Groupex. Quickies, memory only. Then longer news items,

with notes, in pairs or solo. Discuss and illustrate on OHP any notation difficulties and solutions.
2. Labex. Longer consecutive items from tape; solo self-criticism (or electronic pairing) with tutor's help from console.

YEAR IV

In year IV two-way consecutive and simultaneous (FL-E only) are practised more or less equally. Sessions usually start with group quickies or longer warming-up exercises, increasing attention being paid to promptness, accuracy, presentation, resourcefulness. (Conference laboratory is a desirable option for Year IV.)

TABLE 3 Year IV, Week 19 (2 hours per week)

Class 1. Groupex, based on prepared topic, Alternative Energy. Labex: tape of past Finals consecutive exercise, 15 mins; review in booths with worksheet, 20 mins; discussion (either round table or in 'group conference' in booths), 15 mins.
Class 2. Groupex: based on recaps of problems from previous exercise, memory only, 10-15 mins. Labex: simultaneous, video of speech by trade union leader; review with worksheet; discussion.

BASIC FACILITIES

It will be inferred from the tables above that interpreting can be quite satisfactorily taught with the following basic facilities:

Standard language laboratory: audio-active comparative (with, as desirable options: open space at front for group teaching around OHP and/or video; random pairing facility for pair work and reciprocal criticism).

OHP: with large, angled screen, wide-angle lens, celluloid roll, supplies of 'Cellofilm' disposable transparencies, felt pens (soluble and permanent).

Private-study audio facilities: at their simplest, these are cassette machines and tapes for home loan; alternatively solo LL private study positions, or actual LL positions made available for individual work when not required for classes.

Flexible language teaching room

Whatever teaching is done in any language laboratory (language, interpreting, aural comprehension, phonetics, etc) consideration could be given to adopting the layout illustrated in Fig. 1, which has been found to provide an extremely adaptable and flexible teaching space. Typically, a class could start in a horseshoe group at the front around the tutor, perhaps using the OHP, the console loudspeaker, video or voice alone for the first part of the class,

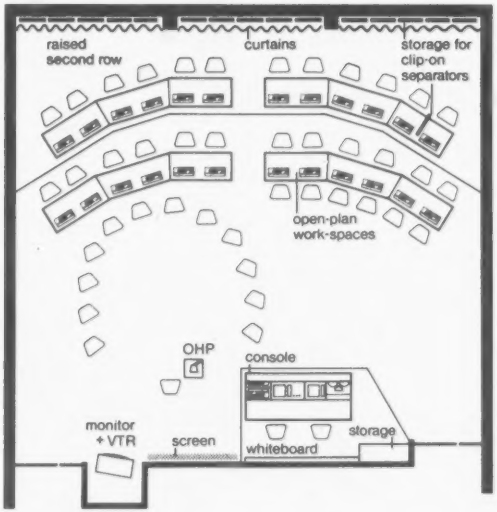

Fig.1

then go to the booths for an individual tape activity, then perhaps return to the front for discussion, role-playing, group work, video follow-up or any other appropriate type of activity. In the 'open-plan' installation illustrated the booth side-screens are normally removed; if required (e.g. for tests) they can be quickly clipped into place.

Conference laboratory

In departments or modern languages centres where there is a post-graduate interpreting course, or where more than 25 hours per week of laboratory time are (or could be) programmed for undergraduate classes in interpreting, oral précis, oral reporting, minute-writing and certain other advanced language activities, consideration could

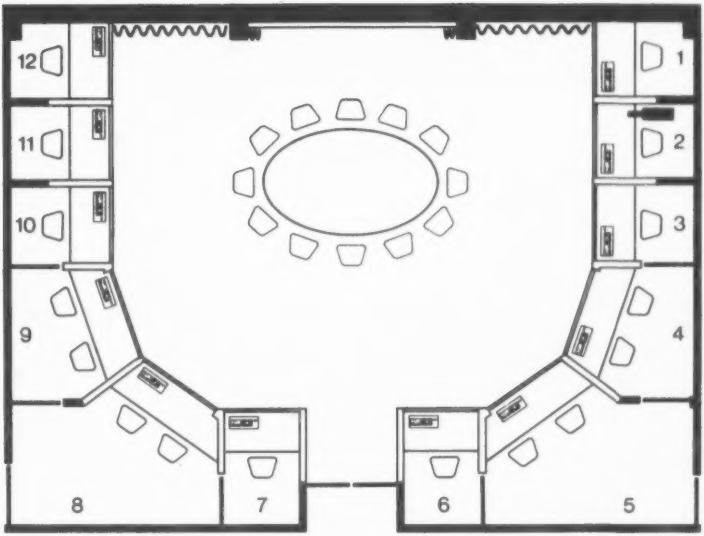

Fig.2 - Conference laboratory

be given to the provision of a specialised conference laboratory (essentially a multi-media language laboratory with all the normal facilities but with a conference-room layout, delegates' headsets and certain additional features, e.g. a facility for grouping booths together electronically so as to constitute interpreting teams of any chosen size). A typical layout is shown in Fig.2

Advanced language teaching and examining room (ALTER)

In departments where there is a considerable advanced language teaching and examining task, where it is necessary to provide full conference facilities for the training of postgraduate students, and where it might also be desired to accommodate small international conferences on occasions when the facilities are not required for teaching, consideration could be given to installing a multi-purpose room (or even a suite of rooms) designed to provide the following functions:

The teaching of conference interpreting and other ALAs (as outlined in the preceding paragraph).

The conduct of a full international conference with up to 20 delegates and up to 12 language pairs, with, if required, video

recording of conference proceedings and video 'piped' to monitors in other rooms.

The conduct of advanced interpreting examinations, with video monitoring in an adjacent room; a second (back-up) audio recording of each examinee's tape; a facility for private conference by a jury of examiners; interlinking of two 12-booth laboratories to provide 24 examinees' positions, with master control in one of the two laboratories.

The layout of a suite of two ALTERS and associated rooms is shown in Fig.3

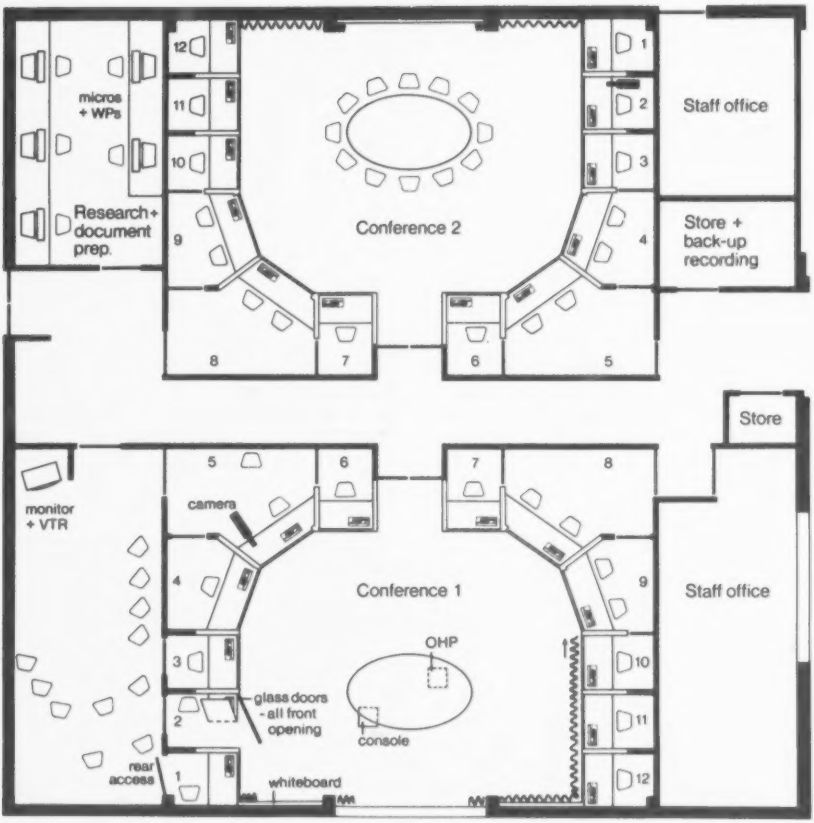

Fig 3. Multi-purpose suite of conference, advanced language teaching and examining rooms.

STRIKING A BALANCE

While the availability of the language laboratory, tape recorder, radio, video and projectors is more or less taken for granted in most language departments, the very idea of providing such facilities as the flexible language teaching room (LTR), the conference laboratory (CL) or the multi-purpose advanced language teaching and examining room (ALTER) could in the present economic climate be regarded as ill-timed or dangerously extravagant. But such ideas are neither extravagant nor ill-timed, and that they should be thought to be so is quite easily explained if one looks back at traditional attitudes to the funding of student places and if one looks forward to the challenge which the information technology revolution is presenting to the whole of higher education.

To take briefly the first of these two points, one has only to remember that for obvious reasons language studies, in common with the other humanities disciplines, have traditionally required very low levels of capital investment when compared to, say, engineering, physics or chemistry. According to official figures [3] a student's cost to the university's recurrent grant in 1983-84 was: Arts, £1990; Science £4870; Medicine, £7760. In a single year in an engineering department the cost of providing test rigs, demonstration apparatus or other laboratory equipment for teaching and research might well run into six figures. Part of that investment could well be allocated to items which represent a new departure for the department; another part could be earmarked for items which might have a useful life of no more than a few years before they themselves are overtaken by new developments. Such is the pace of change that this situation is accepted as normal, as part of the price which has to be paid if science (in its broadest sense) is to continue to educate the next generation while pushing back the frontiers of present knowledge and practice. And of course it is right that we should face the burden of such expenditure when and where it is seen to be essential for the support of necessary teaching and research. In no case may we assume that expenditure in a given department will necessarily be uniform over a period of years. In every case we should continue periodically to reassess the curriculum, determining or re-defining the most appropriate methodologies, and deciding in the light of these which resources will most aptly and efficiently enable the course objectives to be met. Such a line of reasoning, proceeding from needs analysis to syllabus to methodology to resources, has led in a growing number of modern languages departments to the introduction of resources particularly adapted to the teaching of language as communication. Such resources include the types outlined above, but are by no means confined to those few examples.

STEPS TO A REVOLUTION

The first reason, then, for a sudden leap in the cost of technical

support for the teaching of languages is this quiet revolution in methodology, the steady spread of a belief in the value of communicative teaching, which in turn has inevitably created an urgent demand for more and better ways of transmitting, storing and re-creating language in use.

But the second reason for our having to re-think the whole question of resources for languages is as strident as the first was muted: language teachers could conveivably close their ears for a time to the siren call to recognise language as communication and to teach language in use, but no teacher - of any subject - could possibly ignore the challenge of the revolution in information technology. The linguist, ever chary of hyperbole, might ask if the phenomenon can possibly be called a 'revolution'. All those references to the 'information explosion', 'the power of telematics', 'the IT revolution', 'the challenge of new technologies' and so on are commonplace today, but now that we have seen some of the effects of these developments we are coming to accept these terms as more than mere journalists' hyperbole. Groping for some sort of guide, some measure which a pilgrim with a mere literary background might use to help him comprehend the scale of this new phenomenon, I came upon a reference in Robin Moss's stimulating survey, Video, the educational challenge [4], to a paper written by Professor Gosling in 1980, entitled 'Three steps to a revolution'. The first step in this revolution, Gosling explains, was the integrated circuit (integration being the assembly of a number of circuits together on a single flat surface and reducing them microphotographically to postage- stamp size.) From the integration of hundreds and then thousands of circuits we have gone through LSI (large scale integration) and VLSI (very large scale integration) to ELSI (extra large scale integration) - single chips each capable of holding more than a million bits of information. The search for greater and greater miniaturisation is far from over, and each advance in the capacity of the chip means an increase in the possible complexity of operation of the machine and a decrease in its cost. 'What we have seen', Gosling says,

> 'is a most dramatic change in the complexity of the systems that can be built and the cost that they can be built for. Engineers are used to talking about this kind of thing in terms of what they refer to as orders of magnitude, a times-ten change. The microelectronics revolution shows a three orders of magnitude change - a thousand to one - in reduction of cost and increase of complexity over only a few years. Nobody knows what the consequences of such a large change will be. We are historically unfamiliar with changes of this magnitude and it is difficult to identify another. All the way from a man on foot to a modern jet aircraft represents only about two orders of magnitude change in speed of transportation, and that evolution which embraces the whole history of transportation took place over many hundreds of years. In microelectronics we have a three orders

of magnitude change taking place over only a decade. There has never been a larger or faster technological revolution in the history of mankind and what we are facing now has justly been compared with the invention of the wheel or the discovery of fire.'[6]

The second step was the development of large capacity information storage and retrieval systems - familiarly referred to as memories. Gosling postulates that 'a conventional library of, say, 400,000 volumes could be available in a device equivalent in size to a 26 inch TV receiver, with each item randomly accessible in about one second'.

The third step was the development of ultra-rapid and relatively inexpensive communications systems such as fibre-optics, cable networks and satellite transmissions which enable information to be passed rapidly over vast distances and shared among any number of users or subscribers.

Surely such prodigious progress in such a short time can and must be regarded as revolutionary, and if further argument about scale were needed, one could hardly do better than quote Carey's now famous analogy, his comparison between computers and motor cars: 'If both industries had developed at the same rate over the past 30 years or so, today a Rolls Royce would cost £1, it would do three million miles to the gallon, and it would deliver enough power to drive an ocean liner. And, if it had been miniaturised, you could get about 500 on your thumbnail'.[5]

ADOPT AND ADAPT

So the hardware is becoming not only more powerful, but cheaper to produce, more accessible, more familiar, more looked-for at the workplace. Software, however, remains expensive and humanware even more expensive. Little wonder, therefore, at a time when the pressure is on to reduce costs, improve productivity and justify every item of expenditure, that the search is also on for machines to take over more and more tasks hitherto executed by people. At a time when computers, robots, processors of all sorts are sweeping away jobs, processes, trades, habits, expectations, and even whole institutions, those in work feel the need to justify - to themselves as well as to others - their positions. And of course education, even higher education, must expect - for technological reasons alone, even if there were no economic pressures - to be affected in many of the same ways.

An oft-quoted aphorism of the sixties, pronounced at a time when programmed learning was on the ascendant and teaching machines were being seen by some as a dehumanising threat, insisted that 'any teacher who fears being replaced by a machine deserves to be'. That rather flip judgement was, in those balmier days, arguably fairly

close to the truth, as the machines in question were still only tools, low-level systems which needed feeding and driving by - of course - teachers. Even then, however, it was not unknown to encounter people - sometimes, alas, in positions of responsibility - who would try to impose extra students on an already stretched staff by saying 'Can't you put them in the language laboratory?', or 'Haven't you got a tape course you could give them?', not realising that these things were indeed no more than aids, complements to teaching. But today the challenge is different. The telematics revolution is about communication, the transfer of information, the facilitation of decision, and about the scale, the speed and the cost of all these. Education, too, is and always has been about communication, the transfer of knowledge, the development of a learner's ability to absorb and use information. So, as information technology rolls on, offering greater capacity, complexity, speed and reliability, and as interactive devices (devices which can take account of the precise nature of the student's response, and respond accordingly) become more refined, more capable of dispensing a wide range of stimuli (text and graphics in colour, video film, audio programs, synthesised voice or a mixture of these, all with precise and rapid random access - in other words, the capacity to find a precise item of information anywhere in a whole library in less than the time it takes us to reach out for a book), the challenge for education is not how to resist - it is irresistible, say what we will - but how inevitably to adopt and adapt.

SPREADING COMPUTER LITERACY

But how, one might well ask, is it to be integrated selectively into higher education? And which bits from this bewildering panoply should we select, anyway? (Assuming we want to - which is far from certain, as we were under the impression that our particular degree courses were rather well taught, as a matter of fact ...)

Well, we can already at home or in the office pick up a telephone and a few seconds later talk to someone or leave a message on an answering machine in Manchester, Avignon or Washington. We can conduct a conversation between a microcomputer and someone else's, or consult an on-line data bank, or transmit word-processed material - an exercise, an essay, a dissertation, an enquiry, a report, in fact any sort of data - to the next town or the next continent; we can even receive broadcast television programmes from other countries directly by satellite; we can work on a computer-aided learning package which presents material on a screen and in a variety of other ways (worksheet, book, audio tape, videocassette, videodisc). All these are already increasingly familiar, fairly straightforward processes; and yet they are only the tip of the iceberg. Is there really any reason why all or most of these familiar facilities should not become commonplace on a university campus - not just on the computer centres and in a handful of specialised departments,

but everywhere? Some of them are already established and are catching on fast, but the pull of perceived needs in educational provision is infinitesimal in relation to the push of the available technology, and the reason seems to be not so much a matter of finance as a reluctance even to start to consider ways of adjusting existing methods to take advantage of new technologies. This reluctance is perfectly understandable given all the other preoccupations of the higher education sector, but it is also unfortunate, as time is getting short. Within five years, the present trickle of fully computer-literate students arriving in higher education will become a flood. Early in 1984 an article in the Times Higher Educational Supplement carried the headline 'Every student should have one'. The 'one' in question was of course a computer, and the author, John Turney, sounded the alarm: 'If they go to university, students who have grown used to being taught and doing homework with computers may be in for a shock.'[7] He also quotes a report to the Computer Board for Universities and Research Councils, which says 'there is a critical lack of awareness in the academic community of the potential of the new technology and the likely changes it will bring to higher education ... Computer expertise is likely to be found in all university entrants in the next five years ... (but) existing facilities are inadequate.'[8]

The microcomputer has indeed taken off. In British homes there are some 3.5 million micros, while 98% of schools [9] have at least one, with an average of 9 per secondary school and 2 per primary school; there are also an estimated 250,000 small computers in shops and offices[10], so Britain can claim the highest distribution of micros per head of population in the world. Such a relatively lavish provision raises a number of questions, and perhaps the most obvious thing for the educators of tommorrow's computer-literate students is to ask them what they have been doing with all this hardware. So far the picture has not been too bright; there is a vast choice of games and activities - some involving high levels of skill, hand-eye coordination and anticipation - but relatively little in the way of serious computer-assisted learning. In higher education computer-based or computer-assisted learning is still very much in its infancy, and even where facilities exist, 'the bad news', as one Open University tutor put it, 'is the very poor quality of the CBL software packages available. Very few of the drill and practice programs available on micros adapt sensibly to the errors made by the individual students. The computer 'tutors' used in universities do not incorporate expert systems and therefore cannot show the student how to exercise the skills being acquired'.[11]

So although the rising generation of students will arrive in higher education perfectly capable of manipulating programmes and conversing fluently with the computer, they will have relatively little experience of serious educational software; they will, however, be highly motivated for CAL, and it is the gap between their expecta-

tions and what will actually be available for them which will constitute one of the biggest challenges for their academic tutors in the very near future. Fortunately, some imaginative and enthusiastic trail-blazing has been going on, such as the language programs and the TEST authoring package devised by Professor Rex Last at Dundee[12], or the breakthrough in precise control of the audio-tape in the AECAL (audio-enhanced computer-assisted learning) interactive device developed by Dr Keith Miller at Wolverhampton.[13] Interactive video is already generating keen interest, and the 'Autotutor' project, coordinated by David Little in Dublin[14], should provide valuable experience of creating language programs at a modest cost, using ready-made VHS or U-matic video material in conjunction with the BBC micro. In such an effervescent field one obvious and urgent need is for a central and impartial source of information and advice on hardware, software and projects in progress, so the recent creation of the National Interaction Video Centre [15] is an encouraging and particularly welcome step.

DEFINING NEEDS

The pressure of available technology, its volatility and the often bewildering choice could well conspire to produce a shopping-basket mentality, with hapless tutors in desperation taking straight from the shelves items produced for domestic or industrial consumers, and hoping to adapt them for their own purposes. Such an approach will certainly provide solutions in some cases, but there are very good and pressing reasons why we should first be talking to the manufacturer and explaining what our precise needs are: in the first place the solution might in fact be much closer to hand than we realised; and in the second place the more the consumers' specific needs are made known to a manufacturer, the more likely he is to produce more versatile equipment capable of meeting the needs of educational as well as domestic markets. The important thing is for educational consumers - a significant market, after all - to keep abreast of what is currently available, what is in the pipe-line and in broad terms what can reasonably be expected of the current technology. Educators would do well also to try to initiate developments themselves by consulting the manufacturers and by enlisting their help. Thus, while keeping the needs of the course constantly under review, and being careful not to adjust the curriculum simply to suit changes in the available hardware, the educator can and should ensure that technology serves methodology, and not vice-versa.

Yet these developments, for all their immense potential, are overshadowed by the promise of one relatively simple, easily-operated device. Some ten years ago a group of educators and technologists, meeting at a conference in the USA, were asked what functions they would like to see computers performing for education by the year 1985.[16] The forecast for 75% of them was that terminals 'will be as inexpensive and ubiquitous as calculators are today', and that

from homes and offices people would enrol for courses, undertake academic assignments, receive tutoring and sit examinations. For 68% of them 'a system will exist capable of highly adaptive, intelligent, individualised dialogues with students', while 63% of them expected that 'family size computers will be so versatile and inexpensive that they will be a popular addition to the house' and would be widely used for school homework. The fourth favourite among their forecasts (proposed by 60% of them) was that computer graphics would be commonplace, and in fifth place (55%) came the prediction that 'several large national libraries of industrial material will be available on line to schoolchildren all over the country'. These remarkable forecasts were of course for America, and were made ten years ago - well before the micro revolution - so they could well have been dismissed as so much pie in the sky; what is more remarkable is that they have virtually all been realised, and more remarkable still, realised in Britain. The 'adaptive dialogue' system is already available in the form of interactive audio, video or textual material presented with the help of a microcomputer. Not that interactive programs are new, of course. Twenty years ago the brave oral-aural programmed learning and teaching machine experiments were doomed not by lack of clear objectives but by the limitations of the technology of the day: programs which mixed text and graphics on paper rolls with audio tape, film strips and slides were ultimately defeated by a combination of high cost, cumbersome machinery, technical failure, complex operation, minute storage capacity and the virtual absence of animation or moving pictures. In the very near future, for something less than £1000, a microcomputer linked to a videodisc machine will be able to lead a student through a computer-assisted language learning (CALL) program illustrated with colour graphics, text, film, recorded voice, synthetic voice and, no doubt, other wonders; this fully interactive program will be able to summon up within a second or so any item from a single disc which itself is capable of storing, say, 40,000 pages of text, 5000 photographs, twelve minutes of moving picture footage, eight hours' worth of narrated filmstrip presented at two frames a minute, and 1000 microcomputer programs.[17] The prospect of such a powerful teaching tool is staggering, and the challenge that IT presents to higher education could be exemplifed by that one device.

NEW NEEDS, NEW SOLUTIONS

But although in the medium term interactive video will probably be the single most significant development in educational systems from the whole of the IT revolution, it is only one among scores of avenues opening up, including campus networks, portable workstations, on-line access to local and central databases, and a whole world of distance teaching and remote tutoring and examining.

Against this background we remind ourselves that the first genera-

tion to be brought up on computers is preparing to enter higher education. Whatever studies they propose to follow - engineering, divinity, languages, archaeology - they will be computer-literate and, having fed on that particular honey-dew, will to some extent even be educationally computer-dependent.

So the pull of perceived educational needs may in fact come as a result of massive demand from students, and there is a danger that this could lead to hasty, belated or even desperate solutions. Much better, surely, to take up the gauntlet now. As Robin Moss (1980, p 151) puts it:

> 'Our children, although perfectly capable of using books, do not share our single-minded dependence upon them to generate ideas and information. They move confidently and enthusiastically in the electronic jungle and their abilities are our best hope for the future. Whereas the medieval European tradition of education was that a child should be treated as a small-scale man, with all that that entailed for the authority and the wisdom of the full-scale teacher, we have entered the era in which Wordsworth's 'the child is father to the man' has acquired a new potency.'

QUANTITY AND QUALITY

The information technology revolution, then, is clearly inescapable. So to return for a moment to our starting-point, we might ask what form IT-based resources will be likely to take to support and serve the teaching of interpreting. The answer, very probably, is that they will take substantially the same forms as they will for the teaching of languages, or for that matter for the teaching of pretty well anything. The resources are either here now or just around the corner, and the range of options is already vast. No two departments are likely to make the same choice, but the choices that are made will very probably be influenced by the techniques being pioneered by the Open University and by a handful of other institutions, as well as those suggested by the Computer Board's 1983 working party on teaching facilities in universities. The resources and systems include:

Portable work-stations, with large integral memory

Fixed work-stations, micro or linked to mainframe computers

Computer-assisted learning systems

Videocassette and videodisc replay systems

Portable video camera and recorder

Interactive video

'Writable' videodisc

High resolution graphics

Teletext

Satellite TV (DBS)

Flexible, à la carte learning laboratory

Speech synthesis

Speech recognition

Character reading

Image processing

The list is impressive and the hardware exists. Most of it is immediately available and awaiting the attention of the educators, an ever-present and growing challenge to the imagination and the enterprise of academics, educational administrators and managers of resources everywhere. What is almost totally lacking is the software. The challenge to higher education, therefore, is not just to swim with the tide, to be part of the irresistible IT revolution, but rather to ensure two things: firstly that the hardware serves and is shaped by the teaching objectives, and not vice-versa, and secondly that the teaching and learning materials, the programs - in a word, the software - is produced in sufficient quantity and is of sufficient quality to satisfy the massive demand which will certainly be upon us in a few short years.

NOTES

1. Oral and aural skills in the modern languages degree, conference, University of Bradford, January 1984. (The proceedings, edited by G Doble and B Griffiths are to be published by the Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research in 1985.)

2. Taylor, S in the proceedings of the Bradford conference.

3. UGC Working Party Report on Continuing Education, January 1984, Appendix 15, Table 3.

4. Moss, R: Video, the educational challenge. Croom Helm, 1983, p 64.

5. Gosling, W: 'Three steps to a revolution'. In: Journal of Education and Television, 6 (3), 1980, p 84.

6. Carey, P: 'Telematics: the impact on industry'. In: Journal of Royal Society of Arts, 5299, 1981, p 420.

7. Turney, J: 'Every student should have one'. In: Times Higher Education Supplement, 10 February 1984, p 11.

8. Report of working party to Computer Board for Universities and Research Councils, December 1983.

9. Stevenson, J: 'In the piracy of their own homes'. In: Times Higher Education Supplement, 9 November 1984, p viii.

10. Management Today, December 1984, p xvi.

11. O'Shea, T: 'Intelligent computer tutors'. In: Times Higher Education Supplement, 23 March 1984, p 31.

12. Last, R: Language teaching and the microcomputer, Blackwell, 1984.

13. Miller, K and others: 'Audio-enhanced computer assisted learning and computer controlled audio-instruction'. In: Computer Education, vol 7, 1983, p 33-54. The Tandberg AECAL equipment was demonstrated to the CALL workshop at the Bradford conference in January 1984, and to a symposium in Oslo the following month.

14. Information on the Autotutor is available from the project co-ordinator, D G Little, Centre for Language and Communication Studies, Trinity College, Dublin 2.

15. The NIVC (27 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JS) is sponsored by the Department of Trade and Industry and the Manpower Services Commission, with support from the electronics industry (Philips and Thorn EMI). It operates under the aegis of the Council for Educational Tecnhology.

16. Seidel, R J in: Computers and communications. New York: Academic Press, 1977, p 23.

17. This forecast of the potential storage capacity of a single disc comes from a study made for the Public Archives of Canada in 1982, and is quoted in Eric Parsloe's admirably clear and helpful survey, Interactive video (Chichester: Sigma Technical Press, 1983, [distributed by John Wiley]), p 5.

12. Liaison interpreting: evaluation of the exercise and of the students

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As the last speaker at this conference I feel I should make some attempt to sum up a number of the aims which have been suggested as those to which the exercise of liaison interpreting contributes most as a language teaching and language learning technique. In general, most of what has been said has been in favour of the use of liaison interpreting, but it is interesting to note that, as yet, the exercise has not become widespread (it is, in fact, limited to a very small number of British universities and polytechnics) and to wonder why, in view of the enthusiasm expressed at the conference, this should be so. Are the reasons purely practical or are there principled counter-arguments which deserve examination? If there are, then these should be examined before the conference draws to a close. An examination of this kind may help us to define the specific contribution which we feel interpreting makes, to define, therefore, the specific audience to whom it should be addressed, and to define which aspects of the exercise should be central in any mechanisms which are used to evaluate student performance: this, then, is the kind of evaluation I wish to attempt.

Let me begin by quoting at some length the statement made by one of the most enthusiastic practitioners of interpreting as a teaching technique, Andy Walker, once of Salford and now of Stirling. This is what he said at the Burn in 1975 and published in the recent SUFLRA papers from Stirling.[1]

> 'Interpreting is based on the spoken language used in context and in situation; it is communication in the highest degree: it involves intensive, but not boring and repetitive practice: it provides Chomsky's 'rich linguistic environment': it is highly motivating for many reasons, but especially because it is a live, open-ended process: it is creative and involves a certain amount of histrionic talent and empathy: it involves the rapid absorption of a varied lexis ...: it involves many different varieties and registers of the language: it can be at any required level of intellectual difficulty: it deals with language as it is lived now and with the great issues of the day: it provides an excellent training in high-speed cerebration, bringing both the analytical faculty, and the faculty of generalisation, that is cognitive factors, into play: it ties in perfectly with written translation work and training students to go for essential meaning and avoid word for word transcription.'

This statement is very strongly in favour of interpreting and I think, in general, that it has received considerable support from the lectures and workshops given at this conference. In particular, it has been argued that when liaison interpreting is accepted by the student as a kind of 'role play exercise' - what Hugh Keith (1985) [2] called the 'gaming principle' - it is possible to use the exercise to 'cue' the learner with a great diversity of 'messages' to convey and to require that the learner deliver the 'messages' with a specifically pre-determined illocutionary force.

In this way, then, it is argued that liaison interpreting is a means of developing the learner's communicative competence. Many of the ideas have been circulated by practitioners for a number of years. Why, one may ask, have other language teachers been so slow in taking advantage of this technique? Why is the exercise still only used in a few British universities and polytechnics and a few professional training schools?

Obviously, the answer to this question may be purely practical. Maybe the idea has simply not been sufficiently well publicised, in which case this conference may have done something to help. Maybe the circumstances of teaching do not allow it: certainly, English as a foreign language is often taught by native-speakers of English who do not speak the language of the learners and who often teach multilingual groups: also interpreting teaching makes great demands on staff time and resources and this may simply not have been available. But there may be other reservations about the teaching of interpreting which are not related to practical matters and these may also explain why the teaching of interpreting is not widespread.

These are three of the arguments which I have heard expressed:

The first relates to a very old debate which somehow refuses to go away: this is that a second language is best acquired when it is kept apart from the first language. Some would argue that an interpreting session where both languages are continually present is a recipe for disaster, because it encourages interference, however that is defined. Andy Walker's remarks refer to the need to 'avoid word for word transcription', Andrew Riddell (1985)[3] has spoken of the need to 'wean students away from word for word translation'. Many teachers of English as a foreign language would argue that this is a false problem which is created by the approach to teaching via the first language. They would argue, as perhaps Mike Townson (1985)[4] has done to some extent, that you can avoid this problem altogether by teaching in the foreign language. Krashen's (1982)[5] emphasis on comprehensible input, Asher's (1969)[6] Total Physical Response method and many others would back this up. If you counter this argument with the need to 'cue meaning' then those who hold this position will suggest many other ways of cueing meaning via

visual stimuli, role play, simulations, etc and will argue that this is just as effective in creating 'high-speed cerebration' (although of a different nature, i.e. minus M Townson's 'interlinguisticity'), the analytical faculty and generalising faculty. After all, monolingual speakers can acquire these faculties without recourse to another language.

The second argument would put forward the idea that this kind of skill can only be acquired by certain individuals who have a specific aptitude for manipulating language - an aptitude which is vary rare and which cannot be expected of more than, perhaps, one per cent of language learners. The components of the specific aptitude have been discussed by Kevin Bruton (1985)[7] and include such skills as concentration, grasping the essence of a message, short-term memory, etc. Opponents of teaching via interpreting would point to the enormous drop-out rate in professional interpreting schools and would argue that the intellectual and personal qualities which Andy Walker emphasises in his description of the interpreting activities are the property of very few individuals and that therefore this kind of teaching could only be helpful for a very small group.

The third argument would relate to the stressful nature of this exercise. Stress, of course, can be seen as just another barrier and it can be argued that once students have gained confidence and learnt to perform the exercise well, they have overcome a barrier to expression in the foreign language. However, S Krashen (1981)[8] and many others would argue that the stress created by the learning situation sets up a barrier to acquisition which prevents the language used in the environment being internalised as part of the acquirer's language system. If a student cannot be relaxed in the learning environment, then effective acquisition cannot take place. Part of this argument would also relate to the fact that the student has to produce language in real time and that the use of what Krashen has called the 'Monitor', which allows the learner to check what he/she produces and which may be essential if we are concerned with producing accurate as well as fluent production, would be impossible. It could be argued that the situation itself and the demands it makes, mean that only particularly gifted and resilient people will survive.

If interpreting is to be adopted on even a fairly widespread basis as a particularly useful and successful language teaching technique in higher education then these counter-arguments would have to be answered and answered on an empirically verifiable basis. Without such an empirical basis the arguments will remain at a theoretical level.

I will try, therefore, to define the central questions which I think would provide a response to these counter-arguments, or at least provide a basis on which to resolve the argument.

The first argument then centres on the vexed question of interference. Does the exercise of interpreting encourage students to produce Frenglish or similar mixtures of language? This question would seem to be empirically resolvable, by suggesting two competing models of language production in the interpreting environment, by predicting what kind of language would result from the working of each model and examining the actual language produced by 'average' students performing the exercise.

Model I would suggest a framework such as this:

SL utterance is delivered:

the student interpreter assimilates both the meaning and the form of the SL utterance into his/her conceptual framework and creates an interlanguage (IL) or target language (TL)[9] utterance from his/her existing knowledge and linguistic resources plus those just provided by previous TL utterances:

Student delivers TL utterances.

This model would predict that the TL utterance would probably be reorganised in relation to SL utterances both in terms of the discourse structure and in terms of the morpho-syntactic and lexical expressions used to convey the meaning. It would further predict that the TL utterance would show those features which were typical of that learner's interlanguage at that particular stage and that, for example, the errors made, the structures used and the discourse pattern would correspond to that produced by the same learner at the same stage in spontaneous foreign language interaction where the SL was not present.

Model II would suggest a framework such as this:

SL utterance is delivered:

the student interpreter attempts to remember as many of the SL surface tokens as possible, with or without the aid of notes, and find translation equivalents in the TL, probably in more or less the same order of occurrence as in the SL:

The student interpreter then delivers in the IL/TL an ordered succession of TL equivalences without creating an authentic TL or IL structure.

This model would predict that the TL utterance produced would follow closely the discourse structure of the SL and that parallels on a morpho-syntactic and lexical level would be discernable in the TL utterance. It would further predict that the TL utterance would not correspond to the utterance which the same learner would produce in spontaneous speech where the SL was not present. It would predict errors based on interference, sentence patterns 'calqued' on SL

structure and a discourse structure also related more to the SL discourse structure than to 'normal' IL structure at this stage in the learner's development.

We need therefore to examine in some detail transcriptions of the language produced by students in interpreting classes in order to attempt to establish which of these models is being used and in order to provide a basis on which to assess the validity of the counter arguments I have outlined. My examples come from a third-year group of our students. This is a normal, average group (in so far as such a group exists) who have only been doing interpreting for a short space of time. This recording was made towards the end of last summer term by which time this group would only have had seven hour-long sessions of interpreting. These students returned from their year abroad (six months in each of their two countries) at the beginning of the summer term. I have taken a group from this early stage of learning because it is here that the strategies are still developing and we may be able to discern those strategies more easily at this stage than with the more polished efforts of students at the end of their course. I propose therefore to comment on the following four texts. In each case these are presented with the source language (SL) on the left hand side and the IL or TL on the right hand side.

KEY

( ) items left out of SL or added to TL

- - - - possible transliterations

_____ paraphrases

cohesive links

(The four texts come from a single session: text two is the reply to text one, text four is the reply to text three. All four texts were presented as a video-recording at the conference)

TEXT 1

L'année universitaire touche à sa	1	Oh as it comes towards the
fin et nous pensons tous, (plus ou	2	end of the term now we're all
moins en tout cas), aux grandes	3	thinking about holidays
vacances.	4	(and) um
(Alors) parlons (donc) de ces	5	everyone thinks about holidays
chères et sacrées) vacances	6	
auxquelles on rêve onze mois	7	for eleven months of the year
de l'année	8	(um and I think)
Les vacances tiennent une grande	9	in France the holidays play a bigger
place dans la vie des Français	10	role in life (than they do in
(enfin dans la vie de ceux qui	11	England.)
ont les moyens ou le temps	12	
de s'offrir des vacances.)	13	
Trente millions de Français sont	14	In 1983, thirty thousand French
partis en vacances en 1983, soit	15	people went on holiday which is
environ un Français sur deux	16	about one in two
Le phénomène des vacances est	17	(and it's)
un phénomène moderne.	18	a modern phenomenon (which
En France le principe des	19	is connected uh with money obviously)
congés payés fut mis en place en	20	um the actual idea of having paid holidays
1936 par le gouvernement du	21	was introduced in 1936
Front Populaire	22	by the uh Popular Front (and

A cette époque les employés	23	at that time it was just for
avait droit) à une semaine	24	
de congés payés: aujourd'hui	25	one week, now its uh the
le minimum (légal) est de cinq	26	minimum amount is five weeks
semaines.	27	and I think that
Je crois que en France, (d'après	28	in France we are
ce que j'ai entendu,) je crois	29	
qu'en France nous sommes plus	30	more spoilt in concerning this
gâtés que les Anglais pour les	31	than in England
congés payés annuels.	32	
Est-ce-vrai?	33	Is this true?

TEXT 2

Well (unlike) the French who have more	1	Oh je crois que les Français (ont
paid holidays than anyone else in Europe	2	de la (chance) (parce qu'ils ont plus
we in Britain only have three weeks	3	de congés payés uh que les Anglais
a year unless of course you happen to be	4	uh en Angleterre on n'a que trois
a teacher	5	semaines par an uh sauf si uh on est
(In many kinds of employment (though)	6	un enseignant.
days are added on to	7	(En Angleterre) c'est possible d'ajouter
this minimum for each year that	8	des jours pour chaque an qu'on travaille
you are at work (so that) it's	9	c'est à dire si on travaille pour soixante
is possible for you to reach	10	ans on peut ajouter uh uh des des jours
a total of six weeks	11	uh correspondant et à la fin de la
by the end of your career six weeks	12	à la fin de travail uh après soixante
holiday then by the end of	13	ans on on peut avoir uh six semaines
your career.	14	de vacances de plus uh.
	15	
((However) I think it is only fair to say	16	(Mais) je crois qu'en France on a
in the defence of the British	17	une semaine de travaille plus longue

worker) that the French working

week is (on average) longer

(than ours).

So after all that the French might

not be better off than we are in the end

Could you repeat what you said

at the start please

I said that unlike the French

who have more paid holidays than

anyone in Europe we in

Britain only have three weeks a

year unless you're a teacher.

*uh si on travaille plus long pendant

la semaine en France c'est possible

que les Français um n'ont pas um

n'ont pas tant de chance.

*Excusez-moi un moment. What

was the last thing you said?

Well as a conclusion I said that

the French might not be better off

than we are after all.

TEXT 3

You asked (then) how we spend	1	(Alors) vous m'avez demandé uh
our holidays in Great Britain?	2	comment nous passons les vacances en
Well I think this century has	3	Angleterre. Il faut dire pendant
certainly seen a great deal of	4	ce siècle on a vu plus de
democracy entering into travel	5	démocrat démocratie à propos de ce
in this country	6	sujet uh (parce que)
(However though) between the two	7	pendant l'époque de entre les deux
world wars, it was still only the	8	guerres mondiales c'était seulement les
relatively well off who could	9	gens riches qui pouvaient qui avaient
afford holidays	10	les moyens de partir en vacances.
They would spend their holidays	11	(uh par exemple)
at the seaside, (thus founding	12	ils partaient au bord du mer
the reputations of) such places as	13	au Southport ou Scarborough
Southend, Scarborough or	14	Blackpool par ex par example
Blackpool.	15	
	16	(et puis)
(But) the post-war period has	17	après après la um deuxième guerre
perhaps seen the greatest	18	mondiale là on a vu le les
transformation with the advent	19	vacances organisées sont devenues

of the package tour (which	20	plus populaires
brought holidays abroad within	21	
the reach of most people.)	22	uh puis
In fact 30% of British	23	il y a 30% de des gens
holidaymakers now allow tour	24	qui sont partis en vacances
operators to arrange their	25	à des vacances organisées
holidays for them.	26	mais
Now I understand that package	27	il me semble que ces
tours aren't quite so popular	28	vacances organ organisées sont
in France. Perhaps you could	29	moins populaires en France
suggest a few reasons	30	Est-ce que vous savez pourquoi?
why that	31	Est-ce que vous pouvez suggérer
isn't so?	32	quelques raisons pour expliquer cela?

TEXT 4

Eh bien 9% seulement des	1	Uh yes it is true that there
vacanciers français font appel	2	is this difference between the
aux agences de voyage ou	3	number of French people and English
associations. La formule du	4	people who go on package holidays
voyage organisé séduit moins	5	Only 9% of French people take
les vacanciers français (que	6	advantage of package holidays
leurs homologues britanniques	7	(and) um perhaps
ou allemands)	8	there are (several reasons) which I
(Alors (comment expliquer) cette	9	can give for package holidays being
différence d'attitude?)	10	less popular in France
Et bien (la première raison) (qui vient	11	(the first one of these) is that the French
à l'esprit,) c'est peut-être que le Français	12	have a totally different attitude
est individualiste et qu'il apprécie	13	they are very individualistic um
peut-être moins (qu'un Anglais)	14	(and) the idea
la formule du voyage organisé.	15	of the package holiday going on holiday with
	16	lots of people doesn't appeal
(La deuxiéme raison) est qu'il	17	to them um* uh (the second point) which you
est attaché à son coin de	18	can make is that the French are very
	19	attached to their country

terre et surtout à sa petite	20	(and also) to their car and
auto dont il ne peut se séparer	21	they don't want to go on holiday and
même en vacances.	22	leave their car behind.
Et (enfin) notre douce France est	23	(and also) it must be said
si accueillante qu'on n'éprouve	24	that France is such a lovely and
pas le besoin de s'exiler	25	welcoming country that the French don't
	26	want to go into exile from it they
(alors que) les pauvres	27	don't like the idea of going to other
Britanniques éprouvent eux	28	countries whereas (Britain has such
l'envie de quitter	29	terrible weather) that the British uh can't
leur île	30	wait to get away.
	31	*Excuse me a moment. Est-ce que vous
	32	pouvez m'expliquer le deuxième point que
	33	vous avez fait?
	34	J'ai dit qu'il est aussi attaché a son coin
	35	de terre et surtout à sa petite voiture dont
	36	il ne peut se séparer même en vacances.

I wish to deal with the transcriptions in an order which is different from that of the actual occurrence in the class, for reasons which I will clarify later. I wish first to deal with text four and text one which demonstrate the interpretation of French into English, followed by text three and text two, which demonstrate English into French. I am trying to establish which of my two models is being used, largely by an examination of the texts to see to what degree re-organisation of the ideas has occurred as indicated by a revision of the discourse or text structure, to see to what degree there is evidence of re-organisation in terms of the morpho- syntactic and lexical structures, and to see to what degree there is evidence of a strategy of a transfer of surface structure tokens. I will also try and comment on whether what is produced corresponds either to mother tongue norms for oral speech of this kind in the case of French into English interpreting or to an interlanguage norm in the case of English into French interpreting. On the basis of the evidence adduced I will then suggest which model is being used in each case and then in turn attempt to relate what is said to the counter-arguments cited above. Finally, I will make a few remarks about the relationship between this description of student behaviour and assessment procedures, but I think it will become clear during the commentary what is seen as good interpreting and what is seen as less than adequate.

I would like to begin with text 4. I think that this text demonstrates that this student has assimilated the ideas expressed in the French text and has re-organised them into a satisfactory pattern in her own mind before she has begun to speak. The evidence for this is firstly at the beginning of the text where the two ideas which begin the French text - the statistic of 9% and the general comment on habits - have been re-ordered in the English interpreted text: the general comment now precedes the specific example as if this student feels this is a clearer way to organise the ideas.

Secondly, the English interpretation imposes its own structure of explanation: these are announced as 'several reasons' (L8) and then enumerated by 'the first one of these' (L11) with a subdivision introduced by 'and' (L14) and then, after a question back, by 'the second point' (L17) with subdivisions introduced by 'and also' (L20) 'and also' (L23) 'whereas' (L28). This parallels the French, but has its own structure which has been imposed on it by the mind of the interpreter. A good example of this is the way in which the rhetorical question in French (comment expliquer ... (L9), is replaced by ' ... several reasons ...' (L8) both of which ensure a successful link between different parts of the text but in different ways.

In terms of morpho-syntactic and lexical re-organisation this student also shows a certain independence. This is illustrated by such renderings as:

'font appel aux agences de voyage' (L2)
'take advantage of package holidays' (L5)

'il apprécie moins la formule' (L13)
'doesn't appeal to them' (L16)

'dont il ne peut se séparer même en vacances' (L12)
'they don't want to go on holiday and leave their car behind' (L21)

'les pauvres Britanniques éprouvent eux l'envie de quitter leur île' (L27)
'the British can't wait to get away' (L29)

which produce authentic utterances and very little evidence of the transfer of surface tokens and certainly no evidence of this leading to mistakes. Where this latter process may be visible, as in the case of 'attaché' - 'attached' (L18), 'individualiste' - 'individualistic' (L13), 'douce France ... accueillante' (L23), 'lovely and welcoming country' (L25), it gives rise to totally acceptable English expressions, or, as in the case of 's'exiler' - 'to go into exile' (L26), if this is felt to be inadequate, a paraphrase 'they don't like the idea of going to other countries' (L27-28) is added. I think it is also clear that this student is mainly speaking English according to her conception of a normal English style appropriate to these circumstances.

I conclude therefore that in the case of this text model number one is in operation and that the resulting interpretation of the French text is very successful.

I would like to turn now to Text 1 - again from French into English. I feel that here we can see evidence that the processes taking place are less successful in rendering the text. In part this is due to the large amount of information which is lost on the way (indicated by bracketing in the text), but it is also due, in my opinion, to the way in which the ideas have been organised or rather not organised in the interpreter's mind. The basis for the organisation in this case seems to be purely sequential, without any hierarchy of ideas and in consequence cohesion is expressed largely by coordinated structures 'and' (L4) 'um and I think' (L8) 'and it's' (L17) 'and it was' (L23) 'now it's' (L25) 'and I think' (L27), where often the referent of the pronoun 'it' is not clear. The resulting English is odd in terms of the cohesion of ideas. The ideas are aligned in arbitrary fashion and jump unrelatedly from one another by the use of 'and it' ... I would suggest that the ordering used is that of the SL, minus the links which the SL used (possibly the SL text itself here is insufficiently well organised - but it is not as inadequate as the English rendering).

In terms of morpho-syntax and lexis there is more evidence here of the transfer of surface tokens and in at least one clear case it gives rise to an odd choice in English:

'Plus gâtés' ≠ 'more spoilt' (L30)

Other examples of apparently more successful attempts at surface token transfer are:

'onze mois de l'année' (L7)
'eleven months of the year' (L7)

'tiennent une grande place' (L9)
'Play a bigger role' (L9) (but note the gratuitous introduction of a comparison with England)

'trente millions de Français sont partis en vacances' (L14)
'thirty thousand (sic) French people went on holiday' (L14)

'soit environ un Français sur deux' (L15)
'which is about one in two' (L15)

'un phénomène moderne' (L18)
'a modern phenomenon' (L18)

'à cette époque' (L23)
'at that time' (L23)

Examples of the paraphrase type of relationship are more difficult to find:

'l'année universitaire touche à sa fin' (L1)
'as it comes to the end of the term' (L1)

'le principe' (L19)
'the actual idea' (L20)

and possibly:

'aujourd'hui' (L25)
'now' (L25)

In the case of this interpretation, I suspect we have a student who is working in a way which is much closer to model two and who has not internalised the ideas which she is expressing but is operating largely at a surface token transfer level. She applies a Model II type approach with reasonable success at the grammatical level, but this is not sufficient to ensure that the overall textual and discourse structure is adequate.

If I now turn to Text 3, I think we have an example of an attempt to organise in French the ideas presented in English which goes wrong. The English text begins by a repetition of a question which is then answered (L1). The French text does the same perfectly adequately (L1). The English text (by what is actually rather an odd linking term - 'however though') then sets out to demonstrate how greater democratisation of travel has occurred by contrasting pre-second-world-war and post-second-world-war holidays and giving a fact to back up the point. The means used to express these relationships are 'however though' (L7) 'but' (L17) and 'in fact' (L23). The French text introduces 'parce que' (L6) between the idea of 'democracy' and the historical account. 'On a vu plus de démocratie ... parce que ...' (L4). This approach suggests that the contrast between pre- and post-war holidays will be contained within the clauses following 'parce que'. But instead of a contrast we have the links 'par exemple' (L11) 'et puis' (L16) 'uh puis' (L22) which fail to bring out the contrast in events and fail also to show the statistic (30% of British holidaymakers) in a correct relationship to the process of democratisation. The omission 'which brought holidays within the reach of most people' (L20) is critical here and perhaps explains why the explanatory linkage fails. The French text as it stands therefore falsifies the relationship between the ideas as expressed in the English text. Why? There seem to be two possible explanations: either the English was inadequately internalised or the French was inadequately expressed. I think it is the former: there is no reason why this student could not express the idea of contrast contained in the English text and I think the omission in particular of the idea of bringing holidays within the reach of the masses is critical: because that piece of information was missing the different parts of the text could not be adequately assembled.

At the level of the transfer of surface tokens, the French parallels the English in expressing 'You asked me then' (L1) as 'Alors vous m'avez demandé' (L1) 'democracy entering into travel in this century' (L5) as 'démocratie à propos de ce sujet' (L5), but distances itself in cases such as 'perhaps seen the greatest transformation with the advent of the package tours' (L19) 'là on a vu le les vacances organisées sont devenues plus populaires' (L19) or 'aren't quite so popular' (L28) 'sont moins populaires' (L28). An interesting change of mind seems to occur in the case of 'could afford holidays' (L9) where we have 'pouvaient' (L9) quickly corrected to 'avaient les moyens de partir' (L9), perhaps integrating this expression from earlier in the interpreting class.

The actual French used by the student does seem to me to be the kind of language we would expect her to use in spontaneous speech, although we do not have an example of this and as yet no published research has provided any comparative description of undergraduate language development.

In the case of this example of interpreting I think we have someone who is attempting to use a Model I technique and who has come unstuck because an essential piece of information did not register in relation to the SL utterance. The main idea has been internalised but the relation between the constituent parts has not. There is no evidence in this case that surface token transfer, where it may have been used, has given rise to any form which could not have been predicted as part of normal IL/TL performance.

If we now turn finally to Text 2 we have an example of something going radically wrong and particularly of what happens when a student who has not adequately grasped the SL utterance (despite the fact that this was in the mother tongue) tries to resolve the problem by a succession of surface token transfers.

This occurs in paragraph two of Text 2. I suggest that something along the following lines is happening: the student has not realised that she has not really grasped this part of the text, and she is working from notes she has taken. She begins to transfer tokens form SL to TL surface 'days are added on' (L7) 'd'ajouter des jours' (L7) 'for each year that you are at work' (L8) 'pour chaque an qu'on travaille' (L8). She then begins to realise that this is perhaps not making sense and she attempts an 'independent' explanation, 'c'est à dire si on travaille pour soixante ans on peut ajouter uh uh des des jours uh correspondant' (L9), the 'uh uh' is perhaps a realisation that this is only making matters worse (even modern linguists know that 6 weeks equals a maximum of 42 days). She is now in deep trouble and in despair returns to the transfer of token strategy 'by the end of your career' (L12) 'à la fin de travail uh après soixante ans' (L12) 'possible for you to reach a total of six weeks holiday' (L10) 'on peut avoir uh six semaines de vacances de plus' (L13), which, I think, even she must know is nonsense.

However, there is some evidence from elsewhere in this text that the student has attempted to place her own (rather idiosyncratic) interpretation on the English. The beginning and end of her text deal with the 'luck' of the French: 'je crois que les Français ont de la chance parce qu'ils' (L1) - 'c'est possible que les Français um n'ont pas uh n'ont pas tant de chance' (L19-21). This idea certainly doesn't loom large (if at all) in the English text and has therefore been contributed by the student.

What seems to be happening here is that the student has attempted to make sense of what she heard and failed. In one case she invents a meaning which wasn't there, and in another case she fails to grasp the meaning which was there. But in both cases, she strives valiantly to discover and express a meaning, even if in the final analysis she fails. And, where there is understanding or a partial understanding, she uses her own (rather limited) French to express that

understanding: when this fails she is forced into a surface token transfer strategy - but only when it fails. The reason why she resorts to this strategy is simply because there is no other: without an understanding of what you are trying to say, you can only resort to a strategy of this kind.

The problems with which this detailed analysis was intended to help fell into three categories:

> the question of interference
> the question of intellectual level demanded, or
> the existence of a specific aptitude
> the question of the exercise as stressful and one
> that takes place in real time

I would suggest that the evidence from these four texts shows that 'interference' or the surface token transfer strategy only becomes a problem when a lack of understanding of the SL occurs. As long as students have internalised what it is they are supposed to say they will attempt to say it using their current knowledge of French. Only when this fails, for whatever reason, will they resort to other strategies. In my opinion, then the counter-argument based on the problems of interference falls: liaison interpreting offers the possibility of cueing meaning without encouraging interference and it does so in such a way that students are obliged to rely largely on their own interlanguage skills (because they operate in real time) in an environment where the target language interventions are constantly providing the language forms necessary to expand their interlanguage model in the area of language use being dealt with.

The second argument about the intellectual level (or specific aptitude) demanded has rather more substance. It is clear to me from the examples studied that unless the interpreter organises his or her ideas quickly and accurately on the basis of what he/she hears, he/she has no chance of providing adequate interpretation. The exercise is almost self-evidently demanding of intellectual skills: the important thing is to grasp the meaning, not of words but of the whole utterance and in particular how the different ideas are linked together. This may indeed limit the extent to which the exercise could be generalised but, to my mind, it makes it totally appropriate for inclusion in undergraduate courses in higher education.

The third argument relates to stress and to difficulties caused by the real-time nature of the exercise. Again I find some substance in this argument. Working in real time here has, I feel, caused students to make mistakes which they would never make if they were not constrained by time. Examples of this are 'thousand' for 'millions' (Text 1, L14), 'on est un enseignant' (Text 2, L5), 'au bord du mer' (Text 3, L12), 'more spoilt' (Text 1, L30). This will

only occur where focus on form is impossible: it is clear that students can handle these mistakes because they correct them immediately when they are pointed out: but it does seem to me that these will occur necessarily when students do not have time to 'check' mentally their utterances for accuracy. This is not an argument for rejecting the exercise, but for not placing too much emphasis on problems of this kind in assessing performance.

I think that Text 2 also illustrates how stress can build up: this poor girl is gradually made to realise that she does not know what she is saying, but there is no way out. She hasn't understood enough to be able even to ask the illuminating question which would help her out: all she can do is plough on with the increasing feeling of frustration that she is making things worse. The more she panics, the less able she will be to listen attentively which is probably the key to success.

I promised at the beginning of this article (and indeed in the title) to say one or two words about assessment. From my detailed comments on the texts I think it will be obvious that I have chosen to deal with them in an order which goes from best to worst: number 4 is best because it conveys the meaning of the original most completely and most effectively, number 2 is the worst because it conveys the meaning least effectively. The communication of meaning is the essential basis for assessment: the formal accuracy of the language either in terms of phonetic or (within limits) syntactic accuracy is much less important. Amongst the contributory factors to the communication of meaning the most essential is the organisation of ideas and I would therefore argue that the way in which a student organises the interpretation of ideas should carry the majority of marks. I would therefore agree totally with Hugh Keith's [10] suggestion that assessment should be based on three 'levels' - the pass-fail basis should be linked to 'communicative competence' - has the learner communicated the message and the basic illocutionary force? Once that is decided additional marks can be added for 'efficiency' - conveying the ideas as succinctly as possible and for accuracy in phonetic and syntactic terms.

A complete evaluation of the exercise of interpreting would clearly require a comprehensive, statistically valid, ESRC-funded research project, but, on the basis of the small amount of evidence I have produced. I would argue that interpreting is a very suitable exercise for undergraduate students of modern languages on both linguistic and intellectual grounds, although there will always be a few for whom the exercise will prove very difficult, probably because it induces in them a feeling of panic which prevents them from performing at a level which they might attain in a less stressful situation. This latter point might be a reason for not doing it everywhere with all students, but other arguments, such as that based on alleged interference, are probably not valid.

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9. The terms Source Language (SL) and Target Language (TL) are easily understood in the context of the process of translation. Interlanguage (IL) is a term introduced by L Selinker in an article, 'Interlanguage', in the International Review of Applied Linguistics (10[3], 1972, p 209-31) and has been widely associated with the writings of S Pit Corder in books such as Error analysis and Interlanguage (Oxford University Press, 1981.) The term refers to the language system used by the learner at a given stage in his learning, his interim model of the language: progress towards the TL is then seen as a development or expansion of the IL system.

10. Keith, Hugh: op.cit.

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